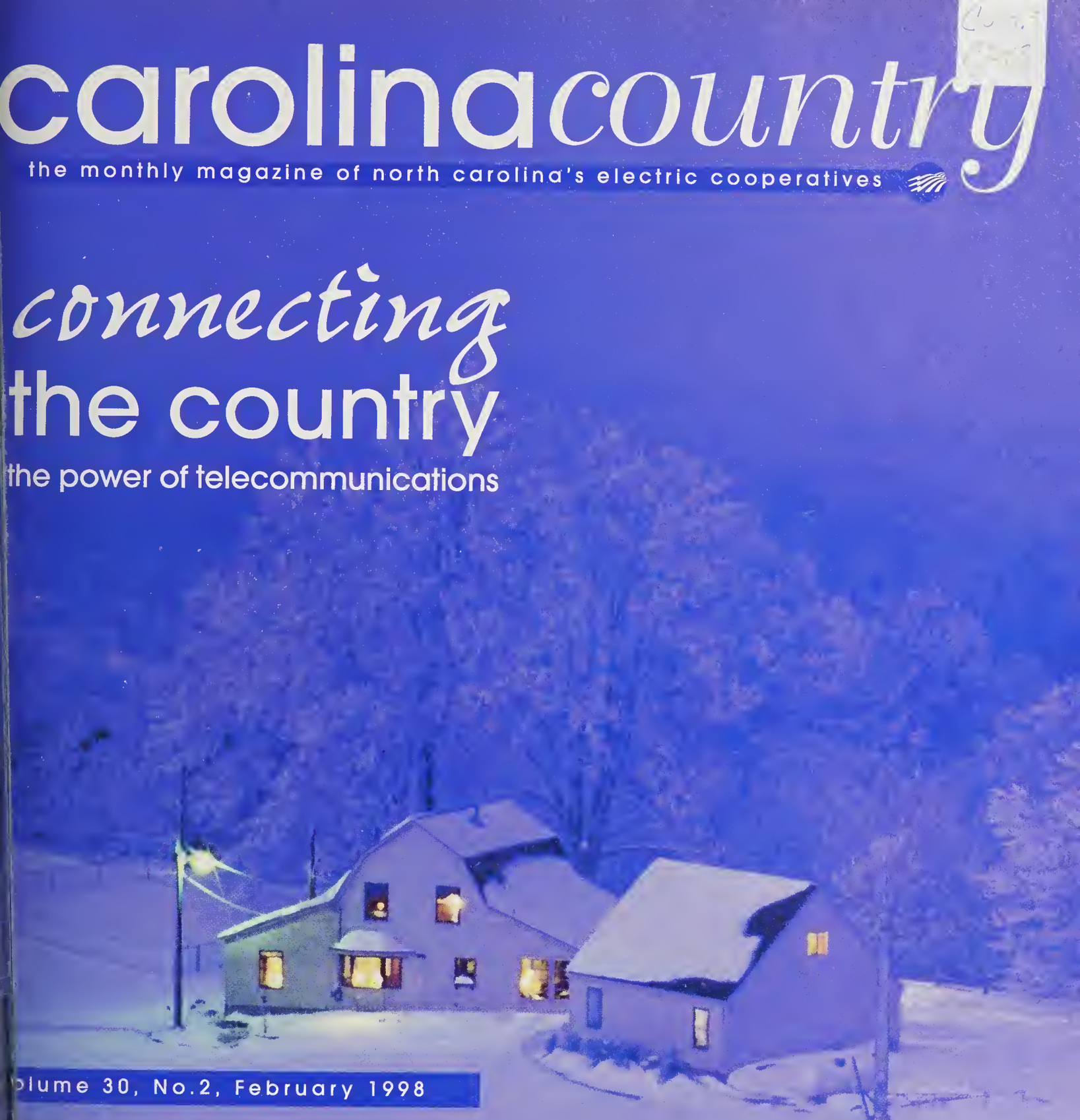
carolina country

the monthly magazine of north carolina's electric cooperatives

connecting the country

the power of telecommunications



olume 30, No.2, February 1998

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The steps to restoring power after an outage – pages 36-37

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Volume 30, No. 2, February 1998

carolina country

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carolina *country*

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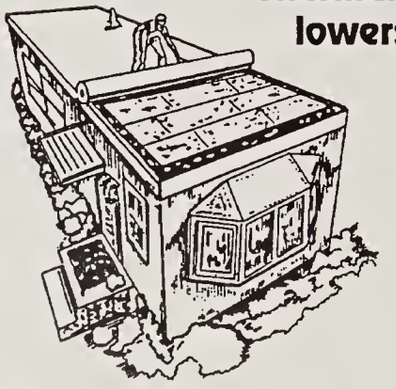
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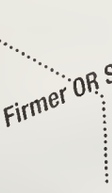
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Commentary

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"The Good Old Days"

By Paul Honeycutt

I have always heard the days of long ago were the good old days. Well, I got a taste of the so-called good old days when Hurricane Fran came through North Carolina in September 1996. The electricity went out for five days.

I had to haul water from miles away unless I used rainwater that fell in a ditch. I could not use the bathroom, so I had to use the path. I had to cook on a camp stove, and it was so hot in the house, it felt like there was a fire in there. The deep freezer began to thaw.

I would try to turn on lights, would try to turn on the television and the radio, knowing there was no power. I thought I would lose my mind. I understood that the light crews were working as hard as they could and that other people needed electricity worse than I did.

The truth of the matter was I had a habit of having electricity in the house. I learned that I love electricity and the convenience it brings.

It was a great day when the electricity came back on. The good old days were not as great. They do not even sound so good either, just old.

Paul Honeycutt of Salemburg is a member of South River EMC.

Prayer for the American farmer

Many animals, birds and plants are on the Endangered Species List. By the turn of the century, animals such as the giant panda and the Siberian tiger will be gone.

But there is another endangered species you probably have never considered. It is the American farmer. This "species" has been the backbone of America, producing enough food sources to feed the entire world. The farmer is a jack of all trades, invented recycling, and worked 60-hour weeks before it was cool to do so. He passed these skills on to his children and grandchildren. He helped his neighbors. He loved the Lord and gave him the praise for his successful crops.

Now this "species" is on the verge of extinction. No longer can he tend the land he loves. He still tries to produce crops, but he receives little compensation. He and other family members are forced to take second jobs just to get by.

Consider how food appears on the grocery store shelves. When you go out to eat, consider who raised the beef or chicken you eat. Did you know dairy farmers receive an average of $1 per gallon of milk? Did you know that in the 1950s there were over 5,000 dairies in North Carolina, and now there are less than 500? Do you know how you will feed your family when there are no more farmers with the "know how" left?

It is my fervent prayer that we as a nation support the American farmer. Are you willing?

Donna Cranfill
Yadkinville

We're on the same line you're on

By Norman Sloan



On the wall in our office here in Waynesville is a framed copy of the September 7, 1939 front page of our local newspaper, the Mountaineer. It has big headlines about the electric lights that went on in the Pigeon River valley section of Haywood County on August 23 of that year.

"Life will be different from now on," the newspaper crowed, and went on to describe in great detail how Cruso Mutual Electric Company – the newly formed, member-owned cooperative that became Haywood EMC – brought electric power to this part of the country. The newspaper said "It represented a community where the citizens could work together toward greater development for the good of all."

I've heard people recently say the same thing about computers and telecommunications technology: "Life will be different from now on." Without a doubt, that statement is as true today as it was in 1939.

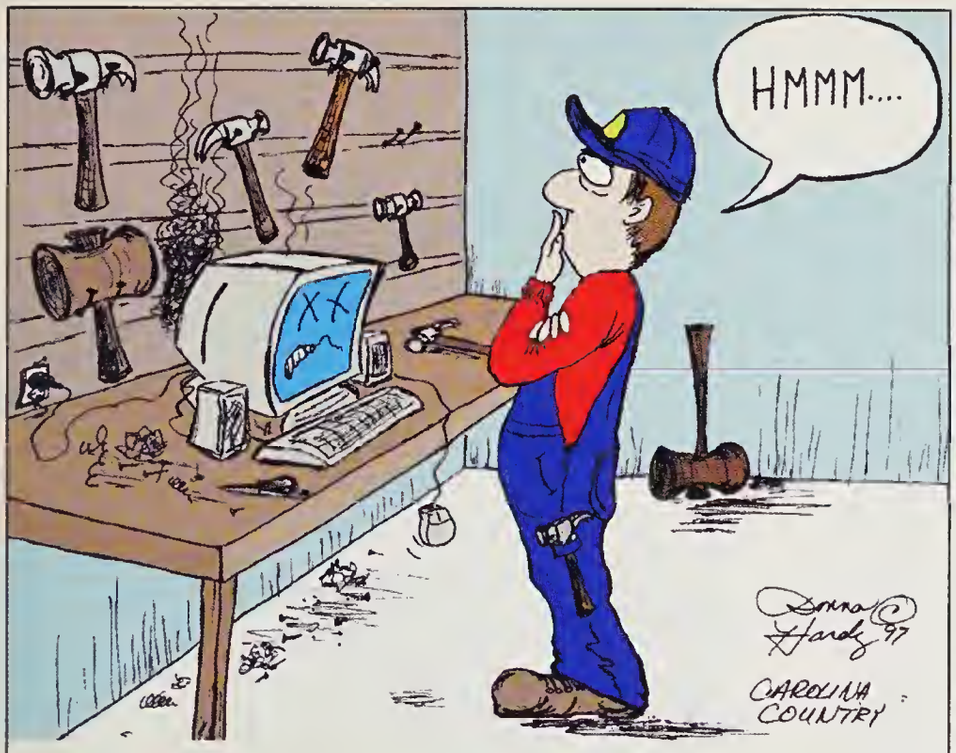
A typical desktop computer today can do more work than the computer equipment available to the U.S. Department of Defense only 40 years ago. From anywhere here in the mountains of western North Carolina we can communicate with the other side of the world in seconds and in full color and sound.

It's interesting to me that just as rural electric cooperatives brought the latest technology to their member communities in the 1930s and 1940s, they continue to do the same today.

Haywood EMC and cooperatives throughout the state are equipped with state-of-the-art technology that allows us to communicate with one another and with consumers, as well as to track weather, read load data, place orders for equipment and in general do business the most efficient way we can. We are connected to our state offices so we can transfer information quickly and safely. Even our field personnel are capable of electronically communicating with the central office and one another so that their work does not suffer from a lack of timely and accurate information. All of this results in smart, effective service to consumer-members.

As more and more people go "on line" with e-mail, Internet connections, World Wide Web service —and who knows what's next? —you can count on your electric cooperative to be on the same line you're on. Because we are a cooperative, we do this together, as the Mountaineer newspaper said in 1939, "toward greater development for the good of all."

Norman Sloan is general manager of Haywood Electric Membership Corporation. Haywood EMC *serves more than 19,300 accounts in Haywood, Buncombe, Transylvania, Jackson and Macon counties, as well as in Rabun County, Ga. and Oconee County, S.C.*



Larry's wife asked him to try and fix her computer.

They miss us after switching electric service

I miss Carolina Country magazine very much since moving here.

I plan to restore the house on the home place in Iredell County soon and will spend some time there, so I may get the magazine then.

At almost 75 years old, I well recall when in 1935 on Buffalo Shoals Rd. we had REA at last. No more kerosene and Aladdin lamps. Each subscriber read his own meter and mailed the reading into the central office.

Cloyce M. Johnson
Sanford

For 47 years I belonged to an electric cooperative and loved it. On July 11 of this year I had to move to another location, so now I am a Duke Power subscriber. You'll never know how very much I've missed my Carolina Country magazine. I received my last one in August. I wonder if there is some way I could obtain the issues I've missed, because I have been saving them for many years?

Keep up the good work, and be sure to start me out with Carolina Country in the New Year.

Sallie Mae Whisenant
Glen Alpine
Ms. Whisenant sent $8 for a 12-month subscription, and we sent her the issues she missed.

Thanks for the song

Thank you for printing my letter in July that asked for a song. I heard from 26 readers! I wrote thank-yous to all who included their address but a few did not, and I would like to say thanks so much to them.

Jessie A. Smith
Hays

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Your *thoughts* on "The Finest Place to Live in North Carolina"

Droves of letters came in describing what you all believe to be the finest place to live in North Carolina. These were passionate letters – from oldtimers and newtimers, students and teachers, grandparents and grandchildren, beachcombers and farmers, all kinds of Tar Heels. And all the authors believe that where they live is the finest place in the state.

It is very encouraging to us at the magazine, and to all the people who work on your behalf at electric cooperatives throughout the state, to be reminded of how many of you just love where you live, your neighbors, your schools and everything that makes your communities, including your electric cooperative.

Our judges agonized over which letters to publish. The selection you see here rose to the top, and each of these writers will get $50. But all the others were worthy. Thanks for writing.

–MG

Pisgah section

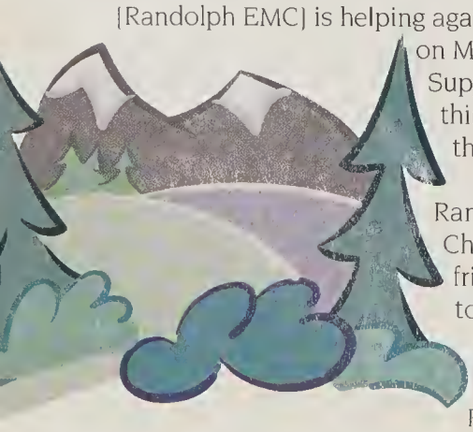
We moved to the Pisgah section in 1946, after the war was over, from Norfolk, Va. I had three children and was expecting another one. Well, we had no lights, no washing machine and no electric stove. I thought, "What have I got myself into?"

The Lord blessed us with a lot of food that year, and I learned to can food on my woodstove — something I had never done before. We moved into a house nobody had lived in for a long time. One night we were sitting there and I looked up on the wall. There was the biggest spider I ever saw. I was scared to go to bed that night.

It wasn't too long until we got our new house so we could move into it. Then R.E.A. came to the rescue and we had lights again. It was like a new world. Now the R.E.A. [Randolph EMC] is helping again by getting us discounts on Medicare and Medicaid Supplemental insurance. I think it's a great co-op that thinks about the members.

So thanks again, Randolph Electric. I have good Christian neighbors and friends. So what better place to live than in Pisgah.

Clara Luther
Asheboro
Randolph EMC





Under the old oak tree

What we love about this place and why we think it is the finest place in North Carolina to live is because we live in the old home place of my husband's grandparents, and this lovely old giant chestnut oak tree is in our yard. The tree's limbs spread 140 feet across our back yard, making a huge canopy. Its trunk measures 24 feet.

We are always asked, "How old do you think the tree is?" No one knows. After a thunderstorm a rotten limb fell from the top and a perfectly formed arrowhead was buried in it. Makes you wonder how old is this oak tree?

It is a source of pride and remembrance: all the visiting, children playing, picnics and courting that was done while sitting in a huge swing beneath one of its limbs!

We have a yard light serviced by Wake Electric, and at night the tree can be seen, still standing even after Hurricane Fran. God took care of us and this beloved old oak tree, too, during that storm. You have to see it to know why we think we live in the finest place in North Carolina.

Audrey and Joseph W. "Billy" Mitchell
Youngsville
Wake EMC

Love Valley

I have lived in and around Love Valley for the past 11 years, after being transplanted here from Winston-Salem. I knew in May 1986 I had found my home in the foothills of Northern Iredell County, and there was no way I was leaving.

That first spring I spent just taking everything in —the sunrises and sunsets over the hills, how beautiful the scenery was — and it seemed like the most wonderful thing to sit atop the hills and look out over the world. It seemed it went on forever and forever, and I felt I had been here my entire life.

The folks in this little town and this community — I just couldn't ask for any better. They took me under their wings and treated me like one of their own. They looked out for me and became my family. They gave me a part of myself that I'd been missing, and made me feel I could do anything I wanted.

Say what you will, but Love Valley and the folks that live here have been awful good to me these past 11 years, and I couldn't think of a better or finer place I'd want to live.

C.D. *Page*
Statesville
Crescent Electric



Clay County's seat

Tucked away in the southwestern tip of North Carolina off Highway 64 rolls the mountain-trimmed town of Hayesville. Breathtaking scenery, a low crime rate and warm people draw newcomers to this little town that serves as Clay County's seat.

On Main Street, you'll find Wayne "Cutworm" Phillips' store, where old-timers loaf on benches and greet visitors with a smile. Inside, the People's Store is a hidden treasure. Cutworm's antiques range from musical instruments and western hats to woodcarvings. A pot-bellied stove heats the store in the winter and serves as a social center.

Across the street, a picturesque 1888 courthouse stands on the town square. The red brick building, with white trim, towering steeple and flowering dogwoods in spring, has been the subject of many paintings.

On the outskirts, Lake Chatuge lies like liquid sapphire in the lush green bowl of Clay County. Its reservoir contains three developed county parks, three commercial marinas, and a $17 million recreation facility.

It's no wonder Hayesville is the finest place to live in North Carolina.

Brenda Kay Ledford
Hayesville
Blue Ridge Mountain Electric Membership Corporation

Where land and water meet sky

Pamlico County, where land and water meet sky, has one traffic signal — one too many.

We live by PCT —Pamlico County Time— and it's wonderful. A plumber will come when promised, if the trout are not hitting grubs at Dawson's Creek. In these wondrous creeks and rivers, catching fish is merely a bonus.

Neckties are used to stake tomato plants. Stacking of crab pots in front yards is allowed.. Yet the Pamlico County Cultural and Civic Center programs rival those at Raleigh's Memorial Auditorium.

Pamlico County is the finest place to live in North Carolina. Though a land of infinite natural wonder, the real beauty lies in the attitude of its people. Surveying Hurricane Fran's havoc, one man said, "Small price to pay to get to live in paradise."

When Tideland EMC's trucks rolled in during the storm's aftermath, residents waved and cheered. But the significance of the moment lay in the genuine expressions of "We understand," seen on the faces of the men riding in those trucks.

Ben Casey
Arapahoe
Tideland EMC (Grantsboro district)

With the Raiders and the Racetrack

The finest place to live in North Carolina is Richmond County. I know, I know, everyone thinks we're a poor county, but it all depends on what you call poor. We all don't have money, but we have pride in a place that cares.

We have one of the best hospices anywhere. We have pride in a sheriff and police department that go beyond the call of duty. Just come through when there's a funeral passing. Police at all intersections, standing tall, with hat in hand across their chest and stopping traffic.

We have two hospitals, lots of doctors and one of the best community colleges anywhere.

God has also been good to us weather-wise. We're far enough from the ocean and mountains to get the best of both.

We have good schools and teachers. (Don't forget the Richmond Raiders and the racetrack.) We have towns and communities that disagree sometimes, but in time of crisis we can come together.

I can go to sleep at night knowing that if I have a need I can call 911 and help will be on the way. We're large enough to have it all, and small enough to care about each other.

Lucille Haywood
Rockingham
Pee Dee Electric



Amis Chapel: 25 miles from town

I live in a little place in Granville County called the Amis Chapel community. It has no outstanding trademarks, but it is the most wonderful place. I was born about a mile from where I live now, 52 years ago. There is no way you could pull my roots away from here.

We go 20 to 25 miles to get to a town, but that's OK, because it gives you excitement when you go there. If you LIVE in town, where are you going to go to enjoy yourself? You live there all the time, so what's the big deal?

I can walk outside and yell to the top of my voice and I still wouldn't disturb my neighbors. We can see their houses, but we are far enough away that we don't bother each other's privacy. But you just need some help, and they are right there.

People out here are so friendly to each other, we don't have the usual race problems. We grew up with each other. My friends are black as well as white. We don't judge people by their color. We go by what the person is inside.

When you walk outside and look around, you thank God you're alive. The sound of tractors in the summertime, birds singing — this is God's country.

Diane J. Wilkerson
Oxford
Wake EMC

Send in your stories and photos. Earn $50.

Next month we'll publish your stories about "The Finest Furniture I Ever Found" to accompany Carolina Country's look at the worlds of furniture and antiques in our state. (The deadline was Jan. 15.)

Here are the themes and deadlines for the coming months. You don't have to be a superior writer to send us a letter. Put your heart into it, as the writers this month did.

The Rules

1. 200 words or less.
2. Only one entry per household per month.
3. Typed or e-mail, if possible. Otherwise, make it legible.
4. Include your name, electric co-op, mailing address and phone number.
5. Entries will be returned only in self-addressed, stamped envelopes. (We will not return others.)
6. We pay $50 for each submission published.
7. Send to Nothing Finer, Carolina Country, 3400 Sumner Blvd., Raleigh, NC 27616. Or by e-mail: carolina.country@ncemcs.com

April
The Finest Joke I Ever Heard
(This will be fun.)
Deadline: Feb. 15

May
The Finest North Carolina Vacation I Ever Had
Where, when and what happened.
Deadline: March 15

June
The Finest Job I Ever Had
Where was it, why was it so good?
Deadline: April 15

July
The Finest Meal I Ever Had
We're talking North Carolina food here.
Deadline: May 15

August
The Finest Lesson I Ever Learned at School
Any grade, any school.
Deadline: June 15

September
The Finest Pictures of North Carolina, a photo contest.
North Carolina people and places.
Color or B&W.
Deadline: July 15

October
You're So Fine: Why I Like My Electric Cooperative
What does your electric cooperative mean to you?
Deadline: August 15

November
The Finest North Carolina Gift You Can Give
(Made in North Carolina.)
Deadline: Sept. 15

December
The Finest Story in North Carolina History
Historical truths, humorous or otherwise.
Deadline: Oct. 15

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Amount	360 Months *7.375%	180 Months *6.875%
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$75,000	$518.01	$668.89
$100,000	$690.68	$891.85

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	Payment	Balance
Auto	$291.00	$13,000
Mastercard	$120.00	$3,200
Visa	$190.00	$4,500
Medical	$200.00	$3,000
Total	$801.00	$23,700

Your old monthly payment $801.00
Your new monthly payment $268.50
$$$ You Save Monthly $$$ $532.50
$6,390.00/ yearly savings

Based on $25,000 Loan/180 Months/*9.99%

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Watering chores, water bills! Sweating behind a roaring mower! Spraying poison chemicals and digging weeds...





...you can end such lawn drudgery—here's how!



Amazoy is the Trade Mark registered U.S. Patent Office for our Meyer Zoysia Grass.

Mow your zoysia lawn once a month—or less! It rewards you with weed-free beauty all summer long.

⑦ Ways Your Zoysia Grass Lawn Saves You Time, Work, and Money!

① CUTS WATER BILLS AND MOWING AS MUCH AS 2/3

Would you believe a lawn could be perfect when watered just once? In Iowa, the state's biggest Men's Garden club picked a zoysia lawn as "top lawn—nearly perfect." Yet, this lawn had been watered only once all summer to August!

In PA, Mrs. M.R. Mitter wrote "I've never watered it, only when I put the plugs in . . . Last summer we had it mowed 2 times . . . When everybody's lawns here are brown from drought, ours stays as green as ever." *That's how zoysia lawns cut water bills and mowing! Now read on!*

② ENDS RE-SEEDING NEVER NEEDS REPLACEMENT

Plug in our zoysia grass and you'll never have to spend money on grass seed again! Since you won't be buying seeds, you won't need to dig and rake—then hope the seeds take root before birds eat them or the next hard rain washes them away.

③ NO NEED TO DIG UP OLD GRASS

Plant Amazoy in old lawn, new ground, whatever. Set 1″ square plugs into holes in the soil 1 foot apart, checkerboard style. Plugs spread to drive out old, unwanted growth, weeds included. Easy instructions with your order. If you can put a cork into a bottle, you can plug in Amazoy.

④ FOR SLOPES, PLAY AREAS, AND BARE SPOTS

You can't beat Amazoy as the low cost answer for hard-to-cover spots, play-worn areas, or to end erosion on slopes.

Endless Supply of Plug Transplants

Transplant plugs from established Amazoy as you desire—plugged area grows over to provide all the plugs you'll ever need.

FREE! Exclusive Step-on Plugger with orders of 600 plugs or more.

Starting your lawn is easy with this sturdy, 2-way plugger. Cuts away unwanted growth as it digs holes for plugs. Saves bending, time, work. Invaluable transplant tool.

©Zoysia Farm Nurseries 1998
3617 Old Taneytown Rd., Taneytown, MD 21787

⑤ IT STAYS GREEN IN SPITE OF HEAT AND DROUGHT

"The hotter it gets, the better it grows!" Plug-in zoysia thrives in blistering heat, yet it won't winter kill to 30⁰ below zero. It just goes off its green color after killing frosts, begins regaining its green color as temps. in the spring are consistently warm. Of course, this varies with climate.

⑥ NO NEED TO SPEND MONEY ON DANGEROUS CHEMICALS

Since zoysia lawns resist insects AND diseases, you avoid the risk of exposing your family or pets to weedkillers and pesticide poisons. Plug in Amazoy and save the money, avoid the risks!

Meyer Zoysia Grass was perfected by U.S. Govt., released in cooperation with U.S. Golf Association as a superior grass.



Thrives from part shade to full sun.

Every Plug GUARANTEED TO GROW IN YOUR SOIL *No Ifs, Ands or Buts!*

Read a guarantee no grass seed can match!

Won't Winter Kill. Amazoy has survived temperatures to 30⁰ below zero!

Won't Heat Kill. When other grasses burn out in summer drought and heat, Amazoy remains luxuriously green.

Any plug failing to grow in 45 days will be replaced FREE! To insure maximum freshness and viability, plugs are shipped not cut all the way through. Before planting, finish the separation with shears or knife. Our guarantee and planting method are your assurance of lawn success backed by more than four decades of specialized lawn experience!

We ship all orders the same day plugs are packed at *earliest correct planting time in your area.*

NOT SHIPPED OUTSIDE USA, or into WA or OR.

⑦ CHOKES OUT CRABGRASS AND WEEDS ALL SUMMER

Your established Amazoy lawn grows so thick, it simply stops crabgrass and summer weeds from germinating!

ORDER NOW!

AND GET UP TO

700 PLUGS FREE!

TO: Zoysia Farm Nurseries, Dept. 617
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3617 Old Taneytown Road
Taneytown, MD 21787

Please send me guaranteed Amazoy as checked:

50 PLUGS	100 PLUGS +10 FREE	100 PLUGS +20 FREE with Plugger	☐ 300 PLUGS +30 FREE with Plugger
$5.95 + $3.15 S&H	$8.95 + $3.50 S&H	$12.95 + $3.85 S&H	$19.95 + $4.60 S&H

600 PLUGS +60 FREE with FREE Plugger	☐ 1,000 PLUGS +350 FREE with FREE Plugger	SPECIAL OFFER!
ONLY $27.95 + $8.25 S&H	ONLY $45.95 + $11.90 S&H	☐ 2,000 PLUGS + 700 FREE with FREE Plugger ONLY $74.95 + $18.65 S&H

☐ Additional Plugger $6.95

Write price of order here $_____

MD residents add 5% tax $_____

Shipping & handling (S&H) $_____

TOTAL $_____

I enclose $_____ ☐ Check ☐ MO

Charge credit card ☐ MasterCard ☐ VISA

Acct. #_____

Expiration Date_____

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

CITY_____

STATE_____ ZIP_____

Electric service study commission seeks comments from citizens

The 23-member Commission on the Future of Electric Service in North Carolina will hold seven public hearings across the state between February and April in order to allow citizens to express their views on the issues surrounding deregulation of the electric service industry.

Although they were not scheduled by the time Carolina Country went to press, the hearings likely will be in Raleigh, Wilmington, Gastonia, Asheboro, Elizabeth City, Asheville and Boone. Study commission members may visit local utilities or business operations in these areas. Scheduling information will be announced through local news outlets.

Members of the commission include state legislators as well as representatives of both industry and consumer organizations.

The commission will accept written comments at the address shown at right. When the official announcement of the public comment period is published in newspapers statewide, there will be specific deadline for sending comments, perhaps 30 days.

Meantime, citizens may submit written comments on the following issues suggested by the commission, or on any related matter.

Comments should be directed to:
Ms. Dee Bagley
Commission Clerk
Future of Electric Service
Rm. 526 Legislative Office Bldg.
Raleigh, NC 27603
(919) 733-2578

On the Record

"Obviously, a lot of the top business lobbyists are hired by one side or the other. I let them all in my door. I talk to everybody . . . No lobbyist or special interest group is going to tell me what to do."

State Sen. David Hoyle (D- Gaston County), co-chair of the Commission on the Future of Electric Service in North Carolina

Quoted in The News & Observer (Raleigh), Dec. 26, 1997



Do you have an opinion? Here are some questions to consider:

- Should North Carolina restructure the regulatory environment of its electric utility industry at this time?
- Could all residential, commercial and industrial customers choose their own supplier of generation and our current expectations of universal service, consumer protection and reliability be met?
- Could all types of customers benefit from retail competition, including small, rural residential customers? How could this be accomplished?
- Could public goals, such as fuel diversity, adequate reserve margins to prevent widespread outages, conservation and energy efficiency, renewable resources, environmental protection, and low-income assistance be met through a restructured industry? How?
- If restructuring is pursued, what would need to be done to ensure that a competitive market develops, that discriminatory and anti-competitive conduct is prevented, and that only qualified suppliers are able to participate in the market?
- If the current North Carolina electric suppliers were unable to recover the costs of their existing plants and as a result ended up with stranded investment, how should those costs be recovered and what limitations should be placed on such recoveries?
- Are the municipal electric utilities and rural electric cooperatives likely to be impacted differently than the investor-owned, private utilities? What is the best way to deal with any special issues raised by these utilities?
- If retail competition were pursued, should it be implemented for all customers at the same time? If a phase-in were required, in what order should customer classes be included?
- Should North Carolina wait until the Congress acts before enacting restructuring changes for its electric utilities?
- Are there questions that have not or cannot yet be answered before a determination can be made as to whether restructuring is in the public interest? What kinds of studies or experiments might be helpful in providing this information?
- If retail competition were found not to be feasible or achievable at this time, what changes could be made to increase customer choices, make the provision of electric service more efficient, or otherwise improve the provision of electric service?

What to do when the lights go out

When severe weather causes power outages, employees of your electric co-op begin working immediately to restore service as quickly as possible. First they attend to primary lines serving hundreds of customers, then they turn to the secondary lines serving just a few customers. Medical facilities and individuals on life-support systems are given top priority. (See pages 36-37 for detailed information.)

When your lights go out, look outside and see if your neighbors are also in the dark. If they're not, check your fuse box or circuit breaker to see if you can locate the problem.

If the outage has affected your neighbors, call your co-op office.

Outages that occur in severe weather, or that last for an extended period of time, can place a heavy burden on the system at the moment power is restored. To help prevent an overload on the system and possibly another outage, you can take these steps:

- Turn off every inside light except one.
- Turn down your thermostat.
- In cold weather, close windows and drapes to save heat.
- Pick one room on the warm side of the house (preferably one with a fireplace). Close the door to the rest of the house and use blankets to insulate your windows.
- If the outage lasts over 60 minutes, turn off your electric water heater.
- Make sure your kitchen range is off, both the surface and the oven. Never use it for heat.
- Turn off all unnecessary appliances.
- Avoid opening the freezer door. A full, freestanding freezer will keep food at freezing temperatures about 2 days; a half-full freezer about 1 day. (For more information about food safety during and after a power outage, call the county office of the N.C. Cooperative Extension Service, or dial the USDA Food Safety Hotline at 1-800-535-4555.)
- If you see a downed power line, stay away! And call your co-op at once.
- Leave your porch light on so co-op workers will know when your power has been restored.
- When power comes back on, slowly switch on your appliances and lights and gradually return your thermostat to its normal setting.

On the Record

"We believe that electric co-ops are in an enviable position in today's rapidly changing electric utility industry. This position is due in no small part to the excellent relationships they have with customers–relationships based on outstanding service and a willingness to listen and respond. The utility belongs to the customers–they're the bosses, and they have a voice in running the co-op. This unique cooperative-consumer relationship is viewed by market analysts as an enviable competitive advantage."

Glenn English, CEO, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, representing the nation's 1,000 electric co-ops



Philips Lighting Company, inventor of compact fluorescent technology, says a screw-based, dimmable bulb became available in lighting stores this winter. It is a 23-watt "Earth Light Dimmable" that can be used with standard wall dimmers as well as with photocells and motion detectors.

Compact fluorescent lights can save electricity

If you are looking for new ways to cut the lighting bill in your home or office, you may want to consider compact fluorescent lamps. Compact fluorescents are most cost effective and efficient in areas where lights are on for long periods.

When used properly, compact fluorescents have a number of advantages over incandescent light bulbs: they last up to 10 times longer, use 25 percent of the electricity and produce 90 percent less heat. The compact models are smaller versions of standard fluorescent lamps, and they have a brightness and color comparable to incandescent lights.

They are available in two, four and six tube lamps as well as circular lamps. There are also types that are enclosed in a glass globe and look like conventional incandescent bulbs. Most are for indoor use.

Compact fluorescents are more expensive to purchase than incandescent bulbs, so if you purchase them for areas where lights are not used heavily, there will be a slower payback. They are also physically larger, which makes them awkward to use in some lamps and light fixtures.

Nevertheless, the savings in energy and operating costs are impressive with compact fluorescents. For example, a 27-watt fluorescent produces more light (1,800 lumens) than a 100-watt incandescent (1,750 lumens). The following comparison - assuming the light is on six hours per day and that electricity costs 10 cents per kilowatt-hour — highlights the differences.

	27-Watt Compact Fluorescent	100-Watt Incandescent
Purchase Cost	$25	50 cents
Lamp Life	1,642 days	167 days
Annual Energy Cost	$5.91	$21.90
Lamps Replaced in 4.5 Years	0	10
Total Cost (4.5 years)	$51.60	$103.55
Savings Over Lamp Life	$51.95	0

Source: Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Network, U.S. Department of Energy

In 1955, Mrs. Dean Sasser Installed A New Electric Water Heater.

In addition to years of virtually maintenance-free service



today's electric water heaters

cost less to buy and install and

heat water faster than ever.

For more reasons why today's

high-efficiency water heaters

are your most economical and reliable water heating

choice, call your cooperative today. It's not

like they'll be busy fixing water heaters.



Cooperative Member
Mrs. Dean Sasser
"If I need another one,
I'll let you know."

North Carolina's Electric Cooperatives

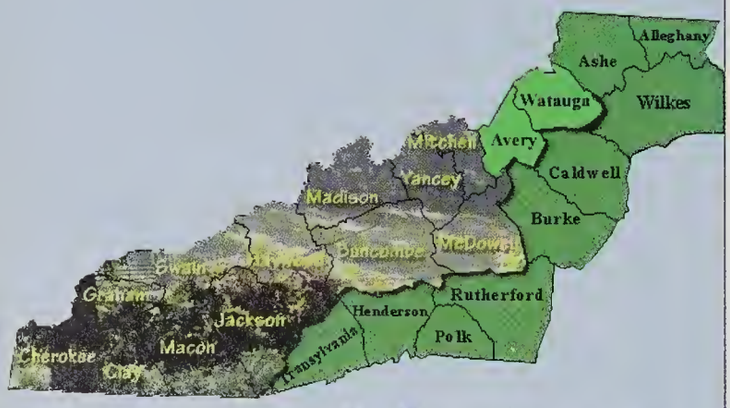
Energy To Get Things Done℠

Serving 1.6 million consumers in 93 North Carolina counties


connecting the country

by Carla Burgess

Making mountain *connections*



Neighbor-to-neighbor Internet *connections* in western North Carolina

I talked with a deaf person today. We didn't use sign language. He didn't read my lips. We had a conversation using our computers and modems.

"On the Internet I am not deaf," says Gary Carden in our e-mail correspondence. "I can converse as well as anyone else. It is a fantastic advantage."

Gary Carden is a writer who lives in the small Jackson County town of Sylva, population 2,300, elevation 2,047. "Being deaf, I am also psychologically isolated and the Internet is my only contact with other writers, playwrights and storytellers," he says. "I live in a region that has an unstable economy since much of the activity is seasonal and tourist-oriented."

His low-cost connection to the Internet comes from the Mountain Area Information Network (MAIN). Gary found out about MAIN through a friend and was given an account at a discounted rate. It's one of the many benefits of this community-oriented network, which offers affordable Internet access to the public, plus discounts and free services for 80 low-income and disabled residents in 14 western North Carolina counties. MAIN also hosts free World Wide Web pages for local nonprofit organizations, has 35 free public-access terminals scattered throughout the region's libraries and community centers, and recycles computers for folks who can't afford one. The network even gives free workshops and tutorials taught by its "circuit riders."

Founded by journalist and community activist Wally Bowen, MAIN strives to give access to the people who need it most — the geographically isolated and the technologically disenfranchised.

"We function like a rural electric cooperative or a rural telephone cooperative," says Bowen. "We're reaching into those areas where the private sector doesn't find it profitable."

When MAIN was launched in February 1996, few communities in this region could reach a private Internet Service Provider (ISP) with a local phone call. The two-year demonstration project — estimated to cost $2.4 million — was supported mainly through telecommunications projects at several western North Carolina community colleges. MAIN also snagged an $800,000 matching grant from a U.S. Department of Commerce agency charged with extending the national information infrastructure to underserved areas. But when the funds expire this month, the project won't be relegated to an unread, dusty report in a bureaucrat's office, says Bowen. Even though MAIN was recently denied a second Department of Commerce grant to expand the service to the 23 westernmost counties, what has been built to date will survive. The 14-county network is almost supporting itself with more than 2,000 paying subscribers and a growth rate of 100 to 150 new users a month. Accounts with full Web access are still reasonably priced at $150 a year.

A vital part of that self-sustaining equation is volunteer support.

Neighbors introduce one another

Anyone who blames computer technology for the demise of community would do well to take heed of MAIN's example.

"We rely heavily on volunteers," says Bowen. "Our help desk relies on the neighbor-helping-neighbor ethic."

Melanie and Brad Sprinkle have trekked all over their home county of Madison, up hills and into hollows, helping other folks set up their computers and log on. For Brad, a high-school teacher, and Melanie, a college student, this involvement has brought them closer to their neighbors.

"We never really got out into the community much," says Melanie. Using their knowledge of IBM-PC compatibles, they've visited more than 20 homes and helped a variety of folks — retirees, homemakers, craftspeople, teachers — get connected.

Connie and Stephen McConnell of Mars Hill have found an even more personal kind of connection through MAIN. Connie, who has multiple sclerosis, uses her low-cost MAIN account to stay in touch with peers and pen pals around the globe who also suffer from MS. Stephen participates in an Internet support group.

"Obviously I can search the Net for stuff on multiple sclerosis and such," Stephen writes to me in an e-mail note. "But what helps me the most is being able to come home, beat from taking Connie to this or that doctor, and be sure there will be some e-mail from people that are dealing with the same."

Even though local Internet providers are becoming more available in mountain areas, Melanie Sprinkle says she's sticking with MAIN.

"I like to think I'm supporting something that's helping my community rather than some big business that's out there just to make a buck," she says. "In Madison County, we have public terminals in Marshall and Hot Springs. People can go in there who've never even seen a computer and get on the Internet. People who would never have that opportunity otherwise. MAIN offers reduced rates to people who need it. America Online and commercial providers just don't do that."

MAIN also provides a product that big commercial Internet providers can't mirror — local content.

"In this global media culture we live in, the understanding and appreciation for local stories has diminished," says Bowen. "We now know more about Tom Hanks' love life than we know about some of the powerful human stories right in our own backyard. Michael Jordan has more cultural authority with young people today than does the minister or the chief of police or a local teacher."

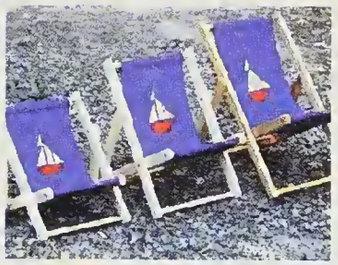
Every MAIN county has a home page, from which users can link to civic and volunteer groups, check the local weather forecast, find out about meetings and news, and even participate in political and other topical discussions via community e-mail bulletin boards.

Because all MAIN users have full Internet access that includes the World Wide Web, they can find out the weather in Switzerland, peruse the Library of Congress and download the plot summary from the latest X-Files episode. But they can also find out about the local volunteer group looking for remedial reading tutors for kids. Or as I found while browsing a MAIN user's personal home page, they can see what's really happening with the renovation of that beautiful old hotel building in Canton — complete with photos of the exquisitely patterned tile floor and smiling close-ups of passersby.

"Of course there are limits," says Bowen. "They can't stay logged on all day long. They must keep their neighbors' needs in mind."

The counties now tied to MAIN are Avery, Buncombe, Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Swain, Watauga and Yancey.

For more information, contact Mountain Area Information Network, 34 Wall St., Suite 407, Asheville, NC 28801. Phone: (704) 255-0182. Web site: www.main.nc.us/



Selling chairs from Clay County

Ten counties served by MAIN have poverty rates that range between 16 and 27 percent, compared to the state average of 13 percent. Swain County has an unemployment rate of over 30 percent. Supporters believe that networks like MAIN can open new vistas for economically disadvantaged communities.

MAIN helped bring the Public Webmarket — a "virtual" business incubator sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture — to Cherokee and Clay counties. The canvas-and-wood children's folding chairs pictured here were made by a Hayesville couple with a home-based business. The pair didn't even own a computer, but Public WebMarket hosted a web page for their small company. Among others, it drew a request for 700 chairs from a Tennessee mail-order company.

You can browse the Public WebMarket and other North Carolina homegrown businesses at www.civicnet.org/webmarket/index.html.

–CB



These days in parts of eastern North Carolina, you can be examined by an East Carolina University doctor and not be anywhere near the university or its hospital. You can be 100 miles away in your own home town, and the ECU doctor or other health care professional can listen to your breathing and heartbeat, look into your ears, check out your skin and talk to you about what hurts.

This long-distance visit to a doctor's office is called telemedicine. The East Carolina University program is one of the first and best in the nation.

Telemedicine works through video cameras, computers and medical instruments adapted for long-distance communication. ECU, Pitt County Memorial Hospital and other partners introduced it in 1992 at Central Prison in Raleigh. The prison sought proper medical care for prisoners without having to transport them off grounds, an expensive and risky task. After considerable success at the prison, ECU in 1993 expanded the service to rural hospitals and clinics in eastern North Carolina.

ECU's telemedicine system now includes service to 11 medical facilities in Ahoskie, Williamston, Edenton, Belhaven, Morehead City, Windsor, Faison, Clinton, Hatteras, Nags Head, Camp Lejeune and Raleigh (at Central Prison) and has treated more than 1,900 patients. The network is called REACH-TV (Rural Eastern Carolina Health Television).

The system works by transmitting camera images over telephone lines. The doctors are in soundproof suites at ECU, and the patients are at remote telemedicine sites. The doctor and patient can see and communicate with one another through cameras, microphones and television screens. The doctor examines the patient by instructing clinic doctors and nurses to use specially adapted equipment that allows the doctor to see and hear the patient.

Connecting doctors with patients in rural eastern North Carolina

For example, a patient in Clinton has a skin irritation. The Clinton-area doctor advises the patient to see a dermatologist in Greenville. Rather than spending a day traveling, the patient decides to consult with the doctor through the telemedicine site at Sampson County Memorial Hospital. The dermatologist directs a nurse in Clinton to examine the patient with special instruments designed to enlarge and amplify. The dermatologist in Greenville can then make a diagnosis without ever physically meeting the patient.

It's like two doctors in the same room

Can a doctor miles away make an accurate diagnosis without actually seeing the patient face-to-face? Research is still being done, but many doctors say that they can.

Dr. Charles Phillips, a dermatologist at ECU who frequently uses REACH-TV, explains that a reliability study in which the same patients were seen by physicians in person and through telemedicine revealed an 80 percent correlation. In most cases, the face-to-face consultation

Today's TV doctors

by Laura Maynard



and the telemedicine consultation had the same diagnosis. "That is about the same as two live doctors," said Dr. Phillips.

Dr. Phillips adds that, "As we've gotten more experience, we are more and more comfortable with it. And as far as the patients go, well, I guess the best word for it is that they enjoy it, surprisingly, across all age levels. . . . Some aren't comfortable with the cameras, but let's face it, some aren't comfortable going to the doctor at all."

"Rural doctors can give their patients the option to either travel two hours to Greenville or simply go across the street to the nearest site," says David Balch, director of telemedicine at ECU. "The convenience is what draws patients to the program." A trip to Greenville for a patient may mean a day off work, possibly without pay. Doctors worry that people may go without medical care as a result. Further, doctors say that especially in emergency cases it may be better not to transport a patient.

The REACH-TV network also connects to 200 "distance-learning sites," and six rural hospitals.

Like most medical technologies, telemedicine is very expensive. The ECU program has already received over $2 million in federal grants from Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) and the Office of Rural Health Policy (ORHP). These grants were originally for a three-year span, but ORHP has already announced plans for renewal. Officials hope insurance and managed care plans will also be willing to contribute, since decreasing expensive transfers will save them money. Further, REACH-TV is one of five telemedicine programs in the country that is reimbursed by Medicare. At ECU, Medicare patients are not charged for telemedicine consultations, and as a result the Medicare reimbursements can be directed to the telemedicine program. Balch says that Medicaid and Blue Cross and Blue Shield are also expected to cover patients' expenses in the future. This will help the ECU program move toward its goal of self-sufficiency.

As for the future of telemedicine, Balch said, "We're moving into the home." Telemedicine may soon be operating through home health care sites. These virtual house calls, called TeleHome, would mainly serve elderly patients. Currently, many home health care nurses check elderly patients daily. With telemedicine, doctors and nurses could check on patients through video telephones that can cost as little as $500.

For more information about telemedicine and the REACH-TV program at ECU, ask your doctor or visit the Telemedicine Web site at http://www.telemed.med.ecu.edu.

> The convenience is what draws patients to the program.
>
> – David Balch
> ECU telemedicine director

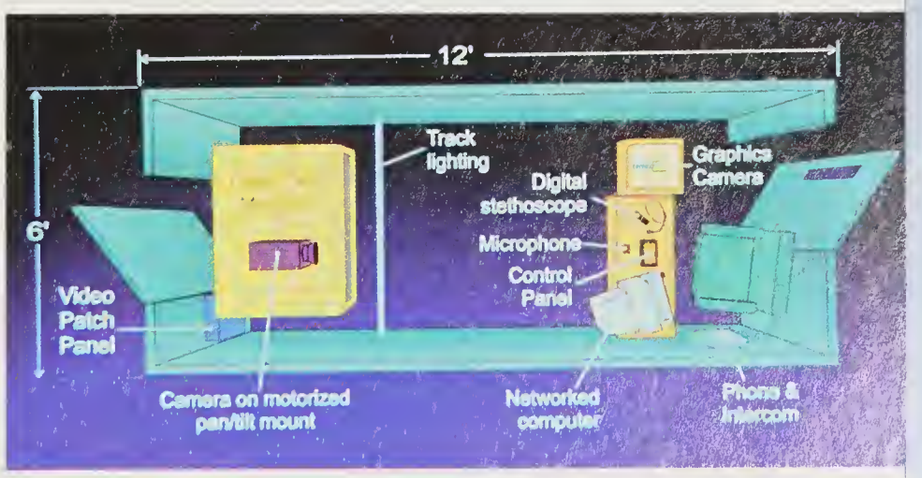


Diagram shows view from above a soundproof doctor's suite.

North Carolina's rural jobs and training *connection*

North Carolina's information highway is bringing help to rural people who are looking for jobs and new careers.

JobLink One-Stop Career Centers are setting up in 25 counties. The goal is to have these job centers in nearly all 100 counties within two more years.

Services at the JobLink centers will offer people a listing of job openings statewide, as well as information about day care and transportation, job training, community college courses and assistance, how to prepare resumes and other career guidance.

Established in 1995, the JobLink program went statewide in 1996. Workforce Development Boards composed of local people in each county oversee the program. Statewide coordination comes from the Governor's Commission on Workforce Preparedness and its JobLink Committee. Funding for wiring, computers, software and training has come from the U.S. Department of Labor.

A pilot program called Q-Net, based in Beaufort County since 1995, has served Beaufort, Bertie, Hertford, Martin and Pitt counties through electronic communication.

The JobLink centers in various stages of development are located in the following counties:

–Jason Dunn

Avery County JobLink Career Center
Newland
(704) 733-8288

Beaufort County JobLink Career Center
1 Harding Square
Washington
(919) 946-8043

Bladen County JobLink Career Center
7418 Hwy. 41 West
Dublin
(919) 862-2164

Columbus County JobLink Career Center
Southeastern Community College
Whiteville
(910) 642-7141

Davidson County JobLink Career Center
197 DCCC Road
Lexington
(910) 249-8186

Joblink centers offer job openings statewide, plus information on day care, transportation, training and advice.

Haywood County JobLink Career Center
1511 North Main Street
Waynesville
(704) 456-6061

Martin County JobLink Career Center
200 Green Street
Williamston
(919) 792-3125

Mountain Area JobLink Career Center
40 Coxe Avenue, Suite G040
Asheville
(704) 232-4159

Pitt County JobLink Career Center
Pitt Community College
Greenville
(919) 321-4534

Robeson County JobLink Career Center
118 West 5th Street
Lumberton
(910) 618-5500

Wayne County JobLink Career Center
309 N. William Street
Goldsboro
(919) 731-7950

Union County JobLink Career Center
1125 Skyway Drive
Monroe
(704) 283-7541

Transylvania Co. JobLink Career Center
40 Gaston Street
Brevard
(704) 884-3214

Henderson County JobLink Career Center
Blue Ridge Community College
Flat Rock

Alleghany County JobLink Career Center
348 South Main Street, Suite C
Sparta
(919) 372-9675

Watauga County JobLink Career Center
207 Winklers Creek Road, Suite 1
Boone
(704) 265-5385

Mitchell County JobLink Career Center
307 Oak Avenue
Spruce Pine
(704) 765-7758

Mitchell County JobLink Career Center
Hemlock Street
Bakersville
(704) 688-2175

Edenton-Chowan JobLink Career Center
1316-C North Broad Street
Edenton
(919) 482-2195

Charlotte/Mecklenburg JobLink Career Center
500 West Trade Street
Charlotte
(704) 347-7113

Surry County JobLink Career Center
Surry County Community College
Dobson
(919) 386-8121

Brunswick County JobLink Career Center
104 Ocean Hwy. East
Supply, NC
(910) 754-5627

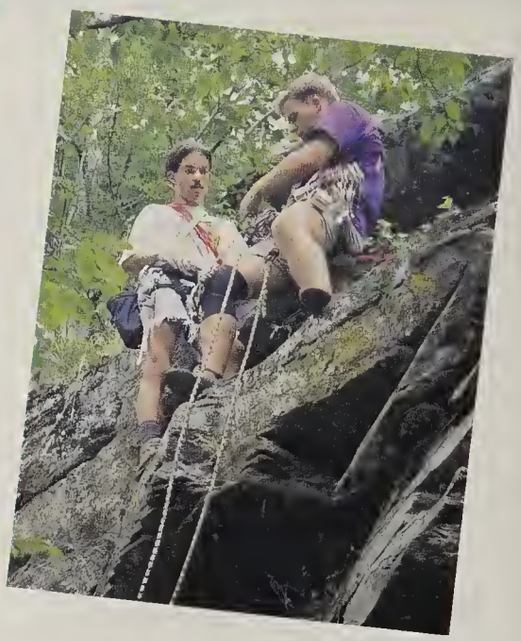
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In *praise* of the lineman

By Jay Jenkins



Have you ever pictured people in your mind and given them personalities without really knowing them?

For instance, you listen to a radio announcer and you develop a picture of what the person looks like. Each time you listen, you imagine the same face and expressions.

Well, for many years I did the same to utility line workers.

My father has been shop foreman with Roanoke Electric Cooperative here in Northampton County for as long as I can remember. And for as long as I can remember, I have always had this picture in mind of these line crew members who go out and fix the problems when the electricity goes down.

As a small child at my father's shop, I would watch these huge trucks going in and out loaded with giant spools of wire and the hydraulic buckets that carry the men to the tops of "light poles." The men usually dressed in the same uniforms, and they seemed to have no faces. They were like soldiers going into battle. (I was a child of the 1960s, and the Vietnam War was everything at the time.)

Every now and again, one would speak to me – usually in a joking manner as he hurriedly walked by to go home. But I didn't really know a lineman then.

Most residents out there don't know linemen, either. They only know that when their lights go out, they want these linemen to be out there to get them back on. They want to hear their air conditioners crank back up on a sultry summer afternoon or see their living room lights pop back on after a terrifying late night thunderstorm.

Over the years, hearing my father talk of "going out on a call," I learned the job these men do and how important their work is to every person who has electricity. (I must add that women work on line crews, too.)

Now, think of the most treacherous of places you can imagine. Think of this treacherous place in the worst possible weather conditions. Think of waist-deep black swamp waters and hidden stump holes eight feet deep. Throw in a couple dozen snakes. Place all this miles away from anyone, and make it between midnight and 3 a.m. This, my friends, is the office of the lineman.

While we are at home, snuggled in our warm beds, linemen are out there risking their lives to reconnect a downed power line that most likely went down in the worst possible weather conditions.

Not long ago I worked late and drove home some time near midnight. Heading toward me at one point I saw two Roanoke Electric Cooperative utility trucks. I knew these trucks were coming into Rich Square, returning to the Roanoke Electric office after fixing a problem and getting somebody's electricity back on. I couldn't help but think who they were. All these years I have had a picture in my mind of these men as soldiers of the night dressed in dark green uniforms and wearing yellow helmets, but having no faces.

Now I know people who actually work as linemen for Roanoke Electric. Yet when I saw these two trucks in the night, I reflected back to the vision of gallant soldiers, taken away from family and loved ones to serve others in need.

The next time your lights go out, take a second to remember that these people do have faces and families. Put yourself in their working environment and realize that they are human, too.

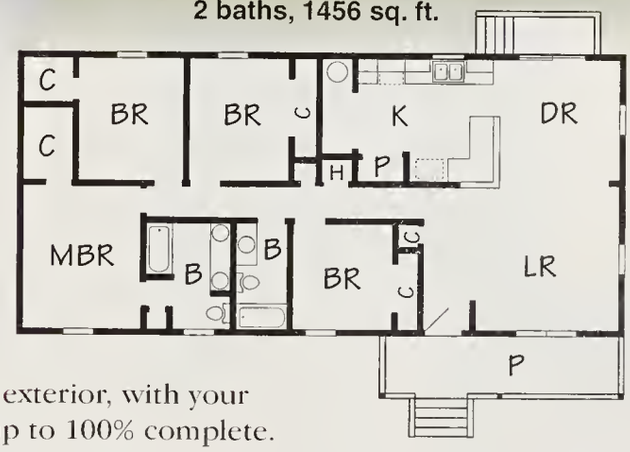
Jay Jenkins is editor of the Roanoke-Chowan News Herald *in Murfreesboro, where a version of this column was published last October.*

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Go Electric

A buyer's guide
by Sharon O'Malley

The new, state-of-the-art TV sets have screens that are flat and huge, so you see a fuller picture. They allow you to watch two programs at once. And they're prepared for the coming of digital TV. Your next television set is likely to be much, much different from the one you're watching now.



This guide is for informational purposes only and not intended as an endorsement by the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives.

Super screens

1 Double take

It's the age of the home theater, and Sharp Electronics Corp. is greeting it with big-screen TVs that brim with cutting-edge features. Aside from a high-resolution picture, the 32- and 36-inch sets have Personal Preference, which allows the owner to program the remote control to automatically select the most frequently watched channels. Its EquiSound feature equalizes the volume between commercials and programs, and a picture-in-picture option allows viewers to watch two shows at once. Models 32JS400 and 36JS400 sell for around $999.999 to $1,399.99. They're sold wherever you find TVs; call 800-BE-SHARP to locate a dealer near you.

2 Loaded

An ultra-flat screen virtually eliminates picture distortion and a newfangled picture tube allows viewers of Samsung's TXF2899 TV to see more than an extra inch of the actual broadcasting signal from all television programs and videos. And a three-way, six-speaker sound system enhances acoustic performance. The picture-in-picture option lets the viewer watch two shows at once, one on the main screen and the other in an inset. This tabletop set has more than three dozen additional features. It sells for around $999 at electronics stores. Call-800-SAMSUNG.

3 Picture perfect

Hammacher Schlemmer's flat-panel television is designed to hang on a wall rather than take up furniture space. It provides the same high-definition color viewing as advanced cathode-ray picture tube televisions, yet measures just four-and-one-half inches thick. The flat-panel television is compatible with cable, VCR, home computer, satellite dishes and laser disc players, and is sold with remote control and compact stereo speakers for $15,000 (for a 21-inch screen) and $25,000 (for a 42-inch screen) through the Hammacher Schlemmer catalog, 800-543-3366.

4 Future focus

Sony has a head start on digital TV broadcasts, which will become available next year. Its Trinitron XBR line of sets display the full digital video impact of today's high-resolution Digital Video Disc (DVD) movies and concerts, digital satellite broadcasts and other digital video sources, including camcorders. In addition, the 32- and 35-inch TVs will easily link up with set-top boxes that will be able to convert digital TV broadcasts. And the sets feature a vertically flat screen, which reproduces pictures distortion-free and with accurate color and detail. Available wherever televisions are sold for $1,799 to $2,799. Call 800-342-5721.

5 Space maker

Panasonic's first 61-inch projection television comes with a home theater remote control and a two-shelf storage cabinet, as well as audio- and video-boosting features. Designed for the home theater buff, the TV has a quick-scanner for scrolling through channels, on-screen displays in English, Spanish or French and a control that lets parents lock out up to four channels. And those who buy Model PT61XF60 may subscribe to the company's StarSight Electronic Program Guide, which lets viewers peruse a week's worth of program information on-screen. You can find the model at electronics stores for around $3,699.95. Call 800-222-4213.

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Starring Ralph Waite, Michael Learned, Will Geer and Richard Thomas as "John-Boy," The Waltons was the kind of show that TV has rarely seen since. And the stories, while of another era, are vitally relevant to every family that has struggled through its own hard times.

And now, you and your family can enjoy these heart-warming stories whenever you like on videocassette. Respond today to return to Walton's Mountain, and experience the rich life even the poorest family can have--just by being together.

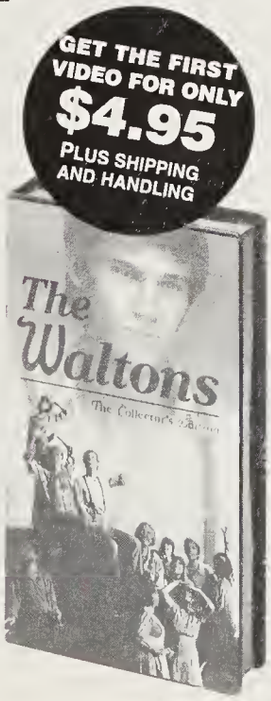


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Meteorite laboratory is looking for fragments to study

By John R. Martin
Director, Oklahoma Meteorite Laboratory

Do you know that a meteorite of one type or another enters the atmosphere from space and lands on the earth's surface approximately 165 times each day? Most fall harmlessly as a shower of small stones or irons. Chances are good that a meteorite fragment is located somewhere on your property. Would you be able to recognize it?

Meteorite rocks have value to the scientific community. They contain information about how our solar system existed in its earliest stages of development. In fact, they are the only materials we have at our disposal, with the exceptions of the rare lunar samples, that originated outside our earth.

Some meteorite pieces can be worth several hundred dollars.

What constitutes a meteorite? How can one recognize the most common types?

Most meteorites came to us from the asteroid belts that lie between the orbits of Jupiter and Mars. They are primarily made up of dense rocky materials with metallic nickel-iron granules mixed throughout. This means that a strong magnet will be attracted to them. The internal colors of these stones can range from white to various shades of brown or dark green to charcoal black.

If you carefully grind off a corner or an edge of a stony meteorite, you will most likely see bright, metallic specks scattered throughout the stone. On the polished surface, curious round objects called chondrules can sometimes be seen. Hence the name chondrite. These are usually about the size of BB's, but they can be somewhat larger or smaller. Stony meteorites not containing chondrules are called achondrites.

Also, some meteorites are composed almost entirely of metal and can contain minor amounts of other minerals. These will look like a piece of steel when you grind into them. A few meteorites, called stony-irons, may reveal an abundance of beautiful, yellow-green crystals mixed throughout a meshwork of bright metal.

Freshly fallen meteorites usually feel rather smooth to the touch, similar to the crust of cracked wheat bead. Their outer surfaces will exhibit a dull black, or occasionally a glossy black coating called the fusion crust, which is quite thin. This fusion crust is often artistically decorated with very fine brush-like markings and thin contraction cracks. In rare specimens the crust may be a glassy, straw color, with the meteorite being white on the inside.

Meteorites can be almost any size and shape, with their corners and edges notably dulled or rounded. But occasionally they will appear rough and jagged from atmospheric disruption. Also, meteorites often exhibit shallow pits that look as if someone had pressed fingers in soft clay.

In time, all meteorites succumb to the process of terrestrialization, and they weather to a brown color because of rusting and soil staining. A specimen that has been in the ground for a long time may look like an ordinary dark rock.

If you find a rock that is heavy and is attracted to a magnet, carefully break off a piece not smaller than a marble. Package the sample securely within a padded envelope, and mail it via U.S. Postal Service to: Oklahoma Meteorite Laboratory, P.O. Box 1923, Stillwater, OK 74076. Small specimens should be mailed intact. All tests will be performed free of charge; however, it is required that sufficient return postage accompany any samples that you wish returned. If any specimen proves to be a meteorite, a fair offer of purchase will be made.

For 14 years, John R. Martin has been recovering and processing meteorites for research.

Some Recorded North Carolina Meteorites

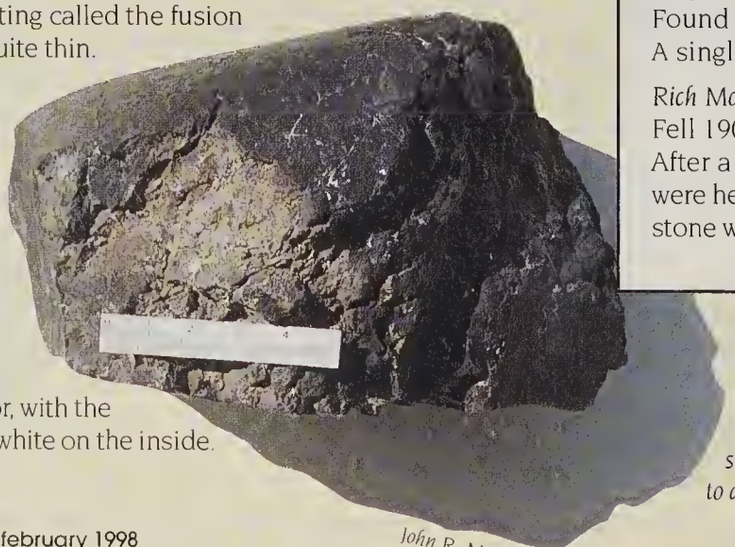
Bald Mountain, Yancey County
Fell 1929, July 9, in the afternoon
Two stone meteorites weighting 3.7 kg.

Farmville, Pitt County
Fell 1934, December 4
Two stones were recovered from this fall weighing 56 kg.

Ferguson, Wilkes County
Fell 1889, July 18
A stone weighing about a half-pound was seen to fall after detonations were heard.

Mayodan, Rockingham County
Found 1920
A single iron mass weighing 34 pounds.

Rich Mountain, Jackson County
Fell 1903, June 30
After a large fireball appeared, and detonations were heard, several stones fell. Only a single stone weighing 668 grams was recovered.



John R. Martin

A farmer found this stony meteorite weighing 7.95 pounds in a fallow field in Nebraska in April 1997. A thin, black crust covers about 95 percent of the meteorite. The area where the crust has been broken reveals the stone's grainy interior. All meteorites will eventually weather to a dark, brown color from rust and soil staining.

For Fire Engine Fans

by William D. Siuru Jr.

Few pieces of automotive machinery have more character than a fire engine, especially if it is an American LaFrance fire engine. American LaFrance is the nation's oldest fire truck maker. Its history dates back to 1832 and Waterford, N.Y., where the Button Fire Engine Company built hand pumpers.

The name "American LaFrance" was born in 1903 with the merger of several manufacturers of fire equipment. The "American" came from American Fire Engine Co., a new company itself resulting from the recent merger of four fire apparatus companies including the Button Fire Engine Co. The "LaFrance" part came from the LaFrance Fire Engine Company founded in Elmira, N.Y. by brothers, Truckson and Asa LaFrance.

In early 1995, when the fortunes of American LaFrance had bottomed out and fire truck production had actually ceased, the Freightliner Corporation came to the rescue. Today, more than 100 employees build American LaFrance Eagle fire engines using the latest technology in a 87,500 square-foot facility next to Freightliner's largest truck manufacturing plant in Cleveland, N.C. The company also refurbishes older American LaFrances that in turn see many more years of service.



The latest models of American LaFrance fire engines made in the Rowan County plant.

The new complex in Rowan County includes a stunning collection of American LaFrance fire engines dating back to an 1858 Button & Blake 16-man hand pumper. The pre-motorized, steamer-era is represented by a tiny "Cosmopolitan," the smallest steam powered pumper ever built. It could be operated by one person, and thus was ideal for small towns and the very narrow streets of the day. The twin horse-drawn "Metropolitan" was considered the best steamer ever built.



The 87,500 square-foot American LaFrance plant.



This American LaFrance Type 191 pumper from the 1920s is one of many historic fire engines in the new museum in Rowan County.

American LaFrance's first motorized fire engine model, the 1911 "Type 5," of which only 48 were built, is also here. A large portion of the collection showcases the many shining red and chrome fire engines of the 1910s, 1920s and 1930s. These include vehicles that were still in service well after World War II.

American LaFrance produced large commercial trucks between 1913 and 1929 and even built 22 passenger cars over a 10-year period in its early history. Only one car survives: a 1911 Type 8 roadster, built as a race-car but never raced. It is now part of the collection.

In the late 1940s, American LaFrance joined the "art deco" era with the 500 Series. The 575 CC Pumper - considered the first "styled" apparatus in the fire service - featured a streamlined grille and hood plus hose and ladders hidden behind body panels. Even more significant was the cab-forward aerial ladder truck unveiled in 1939. This was the precursor of the 700 Series that went into production in 1947. The latest model on display in Cleveland is a huge 1969 Deluxe "Dominion" Pumper.

If you plan to be in the Cleveland area, put the American LaFrance Fire Truck Museum on your calendar. Call ahead to see when the museum will be open. Contact American LaFrance at 11710 Statesville Blvd., Cleveland, N.C. Phone: (704) 278- 6200.

William D. Siuru Jr. is a freelance journalist who specializes in automotive subjects.

How to keep wildlife happy and healthy in winter

By R.K. Collett





Photos by the Colletts.

Wherever you live in the Carolinas, you can give wildlife a helping hand in winter by supplementing their usual food supply.

Birds are especially colorful, friendly and interesting to have around during winter. Bird feeders can be homemade, as many of ours are, but a few, like thistle feeders, are better purchased. We learned early on to suspend feeders out and away from patio or deck, so fallen seeds and hulls will descend to the ground. Otherwise they litter the patio and must constantly be swept away, or the decking and supporting beams are eventually rotted because of hulls gathering moisture.

Place feeders well away from shrubs, so birds have a clear view of any approaching predators, with time to flee. Outfitting pole feeders with baffles to discourage squirrels may, or may not, be successful, but it's worth a try. Frankly, I never minded letting squirrels share in the bounty – though it's a little hard on the budget.

Be sure to keep birdbaths scrubbed and filled with fresh water. This will lessen the possibility of spreading disease within the avian population. If you live where freezes occur, birdbath heaters may be useful. The cold doesn't bother me, so I just trot out and pour hot water over ice in the birdbath several times during the day, as needed. It gives me a little much-needed exercise.

Many birds relish sunflower seeds, including jays, titmice, nuthatches, chickadees and cardinals. Other birds prefer thistle, including goldfinches, pine siskins and house finches. Many birds will come for a standard wild birdseed mix. Still others will appreciate a ground feeder containing cracked corn. Raw, non-salted peanuts are a treat for many birds and mammals; so is a dish of dry, kibbled dogfood. Try all of these and observe what your visitors like.



Evening grosbeaks.

We've found that cottontail rabbits like cracked corn. They show up at the ground feeder every evening, munching away until dawn. We always put several sunflower seed feeders out just for the squirrels. During the day, chipmunks and both the gray and red squirrels visit, while at night the flying squirrels swoop in.

Some birds and mammals enjoy fruit. Apple slices and orange halves are always available at our place. Try any other kinds of raw fruits and vegetables, such as grapes, pieces of sweet potato and corn on the cob.

We've seen both birds and mammals using the salt block we set out under cover, so that rain won't dissolve it. In the winter you can elevate it, perhaps on a stump, to keep it free from snow.

Most important: If you do feed wild animals in winter, you should continue until spring. They will come to depend on your handout and may suffer if you stop.

Wildlings can be both a blessing and a burden. While birds steal some of our vegetable seeds in the spring, or peck our fruit from time to time, they also devour thousands of insects, allowing us to reduce our use of toxic pesticides. Although rabbits, squirrels, raccoons and deer may raid our summer gardens and orchards, we can't imagine a world without the amusing antics of the squirrel and raccoon, or the dainty beauty of the doe slipping throughout the trees.

Plant an extra row or two in the garden, an extra tree or two in the orchard, and anticipate sharing the bounty with your furred and feathered neighbors. We need them around for many reasons. This is their earth, too.

R.K. Collett lives in Haywood County. He is a co-founder of the Felicidades Wildlife Foundation, which rehabilitates injured wildlife and presents educational programs to audiences of all ages.



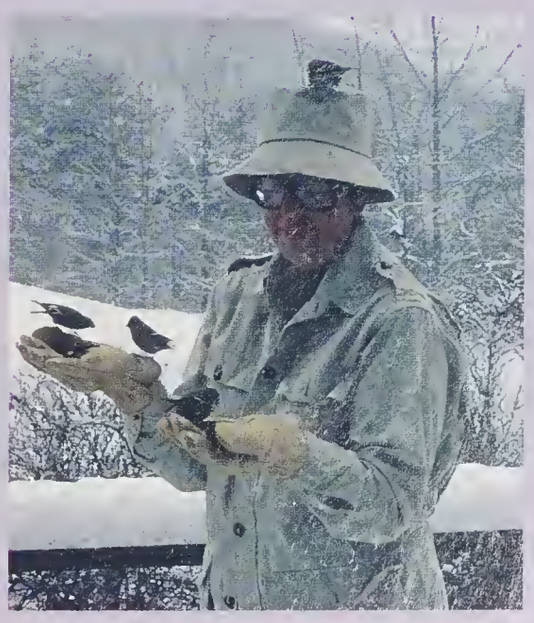
Birdy Brunch

This is a hearty winter food for birds. Here is our recipe.

1 cup melted Crisco (suet is so messy!)
1 cup peanut butter (creamy or crunchy)
3-5 cups plain yellow cornmeal

Melt Crisco (vegetable shortening, not lard). Add peanut butter (cheapest kind you can find). Add 2 cups of the cornmeal. Mix well. Add more cornmeal, a little at a time, until the mixture holds together — not too sticky or too dry. You'll get the knack of it after a couple of rounds. For an extra treat, add a handful of raisins that have been plumped in hot water, then drained. Keep the mixture in an airtight container. Stick it into open spaces on a pinecone, or drill holes through a log and stuff them. Hang the pinecone or log near the house so you can watch the antics.

If you don't have time to mix up a batch of "Birdy Brunch," you can set out some store-bought suet cakes. Some contain seeds or raisins. Many stores carry the inexpensive suet holders to hang the cake from a tree limb.



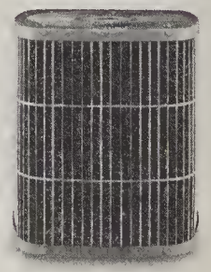
Try standing still with a handful of sunflower seeds

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Beyond Roads:
Paving the Way to Mobility

By Carla Burgess

More than 77,000 miles of blacktop wind through North Carolina's cities and towns. But if you live in one of the 242,000 households without a personal vehicle, all those roads amount to a big fat satellite dish with no television.

True, the state's towns and cities often have public transportation systems, namely buses, that may be cheaper than driving and arguably more sensible. But in the rural county where I grew up, many people still get from point A to point B via Pat and Charley (the local term for feet). That's fine if you've got all day; in reality, most country folk, just like city folk, have to go to work. And the distance is often more than a stroll down the street. Rural residents, by state estimates, must travel an average distance of 20 miles each way from home to work.

"We're not meeting 60 percent of the transportation needs in rural counties," says Sanford Cross, who heads the N.C. Department of Transportation's (DOT) Public Transportation Division.

Our state's investment in public transportation — both rural and urban — is among the lowest in the country: just $20 million out of a $1.7 billion yearly budget. Add this deficiency to the poverty faced by more than 1 million North Carolina citizens everyday, and you begin to understand the barriers that keep many jobless people unemployed.

Lincoln County businesswoman and DOT board member Ann Gaither tags transportation as one of the most important issues requiring action by the state. "There are people in our area that could make good employees ... but they don't have transportation," she says.

In rural areas, many human service agencies have systems in place to get disabled and elderly citizens to grocery stores and doctor offices. (In designated counties, the state also subsidizes transportation or "dial-a-ride" trips for the general public.) Some clients of Work First, the state's new welfare-to-work initiative whose hallmark is time- limited benefits, may use these systems. But there are plenty of people falling through the cracks.

Between 1986 and 1996, the state's population rose 14.5% and the number of vehicle-miles traveled grew 44.1%.



Consider, for example, a frantic 19-year-old mother who telephoned Johnston County Work First supervisor Terry Keene one day. Jobs were within walking distance of the young woman, who lacked transportation, but a day care provider for her child was not. Keene ultimately helped the woman find a work-for-experience job she could reach through a social services vanpool. (The van's route also included her child's day care facility.) But when the company enthusiastically hired the woman after her first week on the job, she was no longer eligible for the public assistance that the transportation arrangement constituted. Keene intervened to find a temporary solution. Meanwhile, the dilemma is common.

"Once our folks get jobs, then they are no longer part of the social services system so they have no way to get to work," says Keene. Further, the people served by the system are already pinched due to limited hours of operation by some transit routes. If the bus doesn't run when your shift is scheduled, the bus doesn't help.

Whatever the solutions, "one size does not fit all," says Kathy McGehee, program consultant with the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services.

McGehee cites a $1.7 million transportation appropriation by the General Assembly that could be used to fund interim transportation programs that help newly liberated welfare recipients keep their foothold. Some of the innovative approaches are as follows:

• The Wheels-to-Work program is a partnership of the Forsyth County Commission- ers, the county's Department of Social Services and Goodwill Industries of Northwest N.C. Inc. that helps welfare recipients purchase cars. Qualified Work First participants pay $50 a month for 12 months, after which they gain title to the vehicle. A local insurance company provides liability coverage at no cost during that first year. McGehee stresses that even with this leg-up, drivers can still expect to spend an average of $5,000 a year to "keep a car on the road." This is an example of a size that, financially, won't fit all workers, she says.

> There are people in our area that could make good employees, but they don't have transportation.
>
> Ann Gaither
> Lincoln County
> businesswoman



The Choanoke Public Transportation Authority provides general transportation to Bertie, Halifax, Hertford and Northampton counties.

• In some counties, Work First clients are allowed to ride county school buses to jobs at a school if they act as monitors during the ride.

• The N.C. Department of Transportation provides vans for local transportation systems to get employees to work in metropolitan regions (and surrounding counties) including Charlotte, Piedmont-Triad and the Triangle area. The Sheraton Imperial hotel complex is one employer in the Triangle that helps buy passes for its employees that commute through the intercounty Triangle Transit Authority. "It's a good retention strategy," says McGehee. "Employers would rather pay for transportation than retrain."

Vanpooling hasn't caught on in rural areas, says the DOT's Sanford Cross, but the department is willing to provide vehicles where there is sufficient interest.

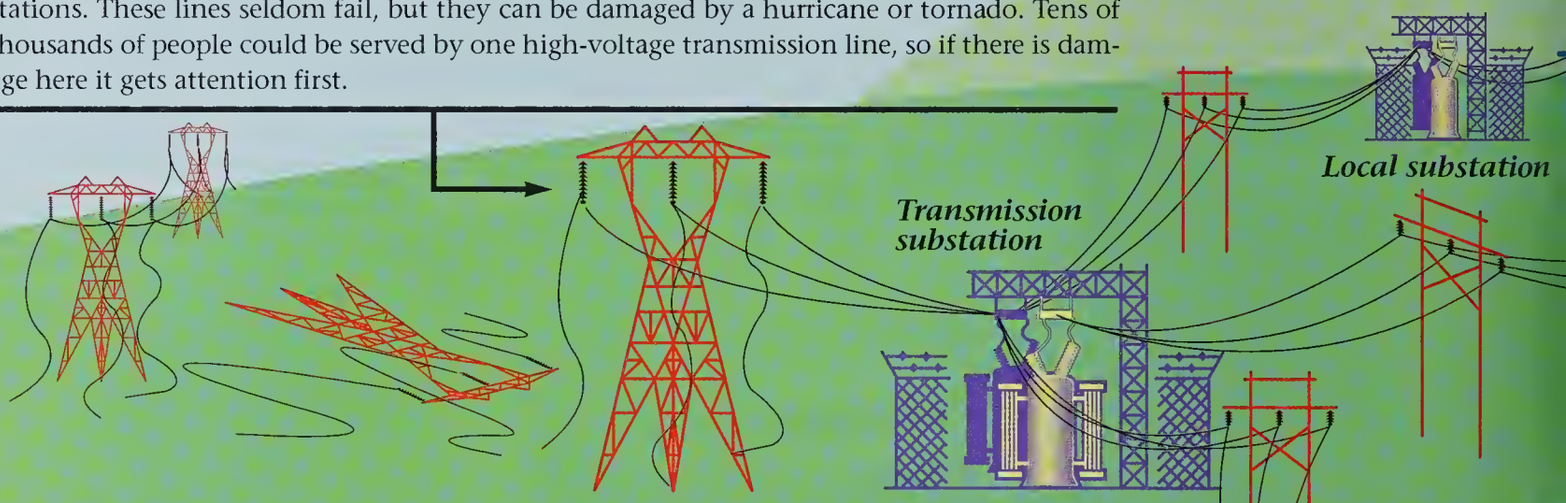
"Vanpooling helps people who are traveling 35 to 40 miles," says Cross. "In a lot of areas you may have employees but not jobs, or you may not have employees but you have jobs. How do you match them up? A lot of times you can do it with vanpools."

Further recommendations for the future, including the proposed development of community transportation systems, are outlined in "The Transit 2001 Executive Summary and Technical Report," published by the DOT's Public Transportation Division, and "Community Transportation Services Alternatives," a report by the Institute for Transportation Research (ITRE) at North Carolina State University.

The steps to restoring power

Illustration by Katherine Fowler

Step 1. Transmission towers and lines supply power to one or more transmission substations. These lines seldom fail, but they can be damaged by a hurricane or tornado. Tens of thousands of people could be served by one high-voltage transmission line, so if there is damage here it gets attention first.



Step 2. A co-op may have several local distribution substations, each serving thousands of consumers. When a major outage occurs, the local distribution substations are checked first. A problem here could be caused by failure in the transmission system supplying the substation. If the problem can be corrected at the substation level, power may be restored to a large number of people.

Step 3. Main distribution supply lines are checked next if the problem cannot be isolated at the substation. These supply lines carry electricity away from the substation to a group of consumers, such as a town or housing development. When power is restored at this stage, all consumers served by this supply line could see the lights come on, as long as there is no problem farther down the line.

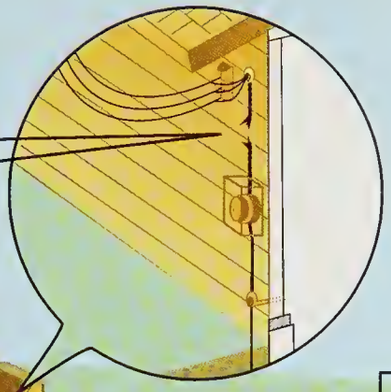
Hurricanes and ice storms. Tornadoes and blizzards. Electric cooperative members have seen them all in the last few years. And with such severe weather comes power outages. Restoring power after a major outage is a big job that involves much more than simply throwing a switch or removing a tree from a line.

The main goal is to restore power safely to the greatest number of members in the shortest time possible.

The major cause of outages is damage caused by fallen trees. That's why your electric cooperative has an ongoing right-of-way maintenance program.

The illustration on these pages explains how power typically is restored after a major disaster, such as a hurricane or tornado. While power restoration priorities may differ from co-op to co-op, electric system repairs generally follow a plan similar to the one illustrated here.

Area enlarged: Members themselves (not the co-op) are responsible for damage to the service installation on the building. Your co-op can't fix this. Call a licensed electrician.



Step 5. Sometimes, damage will occur on the service line between your house and the transformer on the nearby pole. This can explain why you have no power when your neighbor does. Your co-op needs to know you have an outage here, so a service crew can repair it.

Tap Line

Other co-ops

During a major outage, other cooperatives are prepared to help. They send line crews to assist with restoring power. These additional crews, as well as equipment and supplies, are coordinated through The Tarheel Electric Membership Association in Raleigh, a central purchasing and supply cooperative owned by all the state's 28 electric co-ops.

Local substation

Report your outage to the cooperative office. Employees or response services use every available phone line to receive your outage reports. Remember that a major outage can affect thousands of other members. Your cooperative appreciates your patience.

Co-op office

Step 4. The final supply lines, called tap lines, carry power to the utility poles or underground transformers outside houses or other buildings. Line crews fix the remaining outages based on restoring service to the greatest number of members.

Tap Line

Individual households may receive special attention if loss of electricity affects life support systems or poses another immediate danger. If you or a family member depends on life support, call your cooperative before an emergency arises. When a significant outage occurs, your co-op will fix your problem as quickly as possible, or will call to let you know to seek shelter elsewhere.

DANGER!
Stay clear of fallen lines

Carolina Compass

compiled by Jason Dunn

"Sylvia"
Feb. 6-8, Pinehurst
A romantic comedy by A. R. Gurney. Friday –Saturday, 8 p.m. Sunday, 2:30 p.m. Owens Auditorium, Sandhills Community College. (910) 692-3799.

Sentimental Journey
Feb. 7, Fayetteville
A 1940s USO gala fundraiser. Vintage cars and memorabilia. Interact with characters from the 1940s. Music by the Andrew Thielen Big Band. Tickets, $125. At the old USO building, 333 Ray Avenue. (910) 323-1776.

Winter Wildlife
Feb. 10, Beaufort
Nature excursion includes ferry ride, tour of the new Estuarium in Washington, NC and visit to River Park North in Greenville. Sponsored by NC Maritime Museum. 8:15 a.m. – 5:15 p.m. Reservations, $20. (919) 728-7317.

Woodworking
Feb. 14-15, Beaufort
Class on the use of hand tools and woodworking techniques for cutting accurate joints. Reservations, $65. (919) 728-7317.

Jimmy Buffett
Feb. 14, Charlotte
With his Coral Reefer Band. Tickets, $46 or $30.50 reserved. Charlotte Coliseum, 8 p.m. (704) 522-6500.

Vocal Music Concert
Feb. 16, Wingate
Julianne Baird, one of the most distinguished sopranos of the early-music movement, performs at Wingate University. $10. (704) 233-8038.

Catfish Lake Trip
Feb. 18, Morehead City
Observe wildlife at Catfish Lake and Flanner Beach in the Croatan National Forest. 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Reservations, $5. (919) 728-7317.

"The Foreigner"
Feb. 18-22, Boone
ASU Department of Theatre and Dance presents this comedy in Valborg Theatre on the ASU campus. Adults, $5; students, $3. (704) 262-3028.

"Jack and the Wonder Beans"
Feb. 19, Statesville
Part of the Children's Magical Night series. 7 p.m., Shearer Hall, MCC. (704) 872-4773.

"Grease"
Feb. 19, Chapel Hill
One of Broadway's most popular musicals – a 1950s rock-n-roll classic. Memorial Hall on the campus of UNC-Chapel Hill. (919) 962-1449.



Rouault

Picasso

From The Philips Collection exhibit at Mint Museum of Art.



"Masters of the Night. The True Story of Bats" exhibit at The North Carolina Museum of Life and Science.

NASCAR
Feb. 21-22, Rockingham
Goodwrench 200/400 Winston Cup Series Stock Car Race. 11.a.m. – 5 p.m. North Carolina Motor Speedway. (910) 582-2861.

"Pops" Concert
Feb. 21-22, Pinehurst
Moore County Choral Society "Pops" perform. Saturday, 8 p.m. Sunday, 4 p.m. Owens Auditorium, Sandhills Community College. (910) 692-1165.

Southern Spring Show
Feb. 21-March 1, Charlotte
Flower and garden exposition. Focus on coastal gardening and landscaping. 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Saturday. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sundays. Charlotte Merchandise Mart. $8, adults. Youth 12 and under, free. (704) 376-6594.

Slalom Races
Feb. 25, Banner Elk
All skiers invited to participate in the annual Stewart Smith Memorial. Racing begins at 9 a.m. on Sugar Mountain. 1-800-SUGAR-MT.

Specialty Crops School
Feb. 27, Oxford
Growing and marketing of high value specialty crops for the diversified grower. Ramada Inn. Contact Carl Cantaluppi (919) 603-1350.

Commercial Fishing Show
Feb. 28- March 1, Morehead City
Maritime suppliers, nautical arts and crafts, educational displays, forums and seminars, children's activities. Crystal Coast Civic Center. (919) 633-2288.

Irish Orchestra
March 2, Chapel Hill
RTE Irish National Radio Orchestra, three-time winner of the Nordring Radio Prize. Memorial Hall, UNC. (919) 962-1449.

Ongoing

Science and Technology

Through Feb. 15, Statesville
Features children's artwork from around the world. The Arts and Science Center. (704) 873-4734.

Art Exhibit

Feb. 2-27, Rockingham
Featuring the work of Rockingham native Jennine Hough. Includes work from the New Seens exhibit, featured in American Artist Magazine. Leath Library, 412 Franklyn St. Rockingham. (910) 895-6909.

"The First Emperor of China"

Through March 6, Charlotte
Film about the boy-king whose dynasty lasted 2,200 years. On the giant screen at The Charlotte Observer Omnimax theater at Discovery Place. $6.50, $5 and $2.75. (800) 935-0553.

Maya Lin Topologies

Through March 29, Winston-Salem
Survey of the career of Maya Lin, the architect who designed the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial in Washington, D.C. Showcases 15 works spanning Lin's career. SECCA. (336) 725-1904.

The Phillips Collection

Through April 5, Charlotte
An exhibit of 74 American, European and Mexican still-life paintings by 46 artists of the modern era. Mint Museum of Art. $4, adults; $3, seniors; $2, students. (704) 337-2000.

"Master of the Night: The True Story of Bats"

Through April 5, Durham
A special exhibit and educational program on bats including interactive displays, specimens, bat heads, videos, and models and habitats illustrating the lives of bats. (919) 220-5429.

Deadlines:
April.....Feb. 24
May.....Mar. 25
June.....Apr. 24

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by Murry L. Broach - Staff Writer

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► Get up to $800 for food.
► Free legal help.
► How to get some help in paying your rent, wherever you live.
► How to get up to $15,000 free money to spruce up your home!
► Here's where to get $1,800 to keep you warm this winter.
► Here's how to get help in paying your electric bill.
► Access the very best research on our planet on how you can live longer.
► Are you becoming more forgetful? Here's valuable free information you should get now.
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► Osteoporosis: Learn about the causes, risk factors and new treatments.
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Chris Lambert Wins $25 Prize

Chris Lambert of Elizabeth City was among 257 people who submitted solutions to the puzzle Joyner's Corner offered in December. Thanks to everyone who entered. Mr. Lambert's entry was chosen at random, and because his solution was a correct one, he won the $25 prize. The question was

What is a *Merry Christmas* Worth?

M	e	r	r	y		C	h	r	i	s	t	m	a	s	
0 +	7 +	3 +	3 +	8		9 +	2 +	3 +	4 +	1 +	5 +	0 +	6 +	1	= 52

Here is one solution. There are others.

Given:

HIM=6	HIS=7	HER=12	MIRTH=14	SHIRT=15
CASH=18	CRIME=23	CHAIR=24	REACH=27	MYSTERY=32

MIRTH (14) - HIM (6) = RT (8)
REACH (27) - HER (12) = AC (15)
CASH (18) - AC (15) = SH (3)
SHIRT (15) - SH (3) - RT (8) = I (4)
REACH = 27 CHAIR = 24 Therefore E = I + 3 I = 4 Therefore E = 7
HIM (6) - I (4) = HM (2) Therefore H = **0** or 2 and M = 2 or **0**
HIS(7) - I (4) = HS (3) If H = **0** then S = 3 If H = 2 then S = 1
HER (12) - E (7) = HR (5) If H = **0** then R = 5 If H = 2 then R = 3
RT = 8 R = 5 or 3 Therefore T = 5 or 3
If R = 5 or 3 and T = 5 or 3 then S cannot equal 3. Therefore S = 1 and H = 2.
HIM (6) - H (2) - I (4) = M (**0**)
HR (5) - H (2) = R (3)
RT (8) - R (3) = T (5)
CRIME (23) - R (3) -I (4) - M (**0**) - E (7) = C (9)
AC (15) - C(9) = A (6)
MYSTERY (32) - M (**0**) - S (1) - T (5) - E (7) - R (3) = YY (16) Therefore Y = 8
And all equations check.

UNSCRAMBLIT!

"What is so rare as a day in June?" asks the poet.
To which the pragmatist answers,

"p epc dl rwohbphc-unwhw phw
glic utwluc-wdanu."

Use the capital letters below to help fill in the blanks at left. All letters do not appear in the clues.

"ABEDF GHI NLORW" means
p o w e r a n d l i g h t

Answer on page 53

Southern Exposure

"My pants are wet, but I didn't do it!" This memorable exclamation by a 6-year-old is the title of a delightful collection of unintentional humor, wit and wisdom of children, recorded by a grammar school principal.

The quotations are chronicled by George Wilkins of Hendersonville, who served as principal of Bruce Drysdale Elementary School for 30 years. Here are some more gems from Wilkins' collection.

- Told during Share Time: "I woke up last night and heard a strange snoring noise. I went into mama's room, and there was our good friend and neighbor John spending the night with her."
- Two boys were pleading not to be punished. "Please don't whip us this time!," begged the first. Then the second one chimed in, "And don't whip us next time, either!"
- When asked why he had traded off his two pennies for another boy's quarter, one youngster wisely related, "I know a real dumb kid who will give me four pennies for this one."
- "'Amen' means you're through and God knows it."
- "My dog got hurt so we called the vegetarian."

You will find yourself reading aloud and laughing out loud at something on every page of this book, which was originally published in 1980. Recently republished in an expanded format, the paperback is available for $7.95 from Mountain Lore book store in Hendersonville (704-693-5096) or Waldenbooks (704-692-4957).

One last story, which Wilkins says happened at a nearby private school: Told the word "frugal" means "to save," the class was to write a story using the new word. One little fellow got up and read his story. "The princess looked out of her prison tower and saw the prince. 'Frugal me! Frugal me!' she cried. So he climbed the tower and frugaled her and they lived happily ever after."

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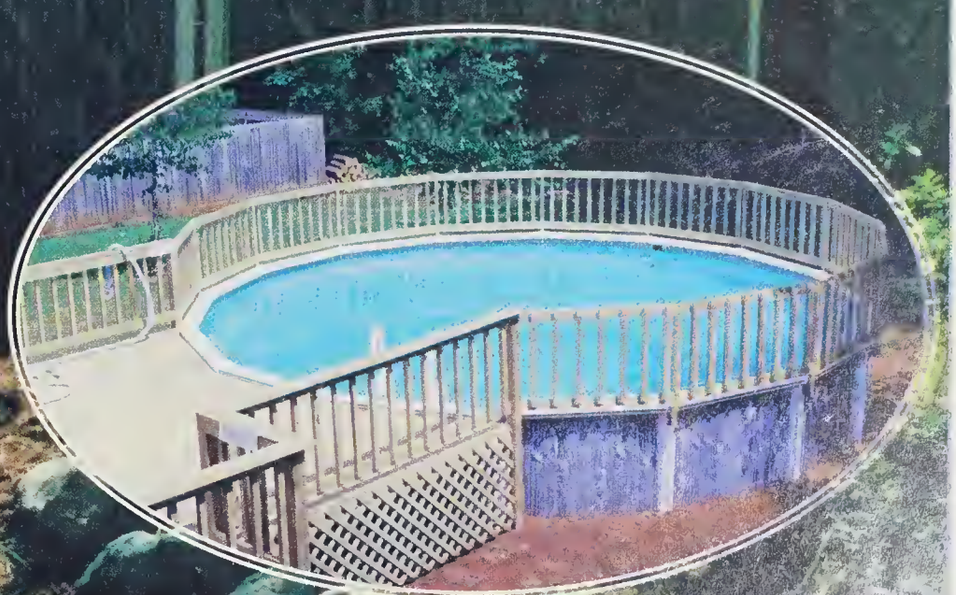
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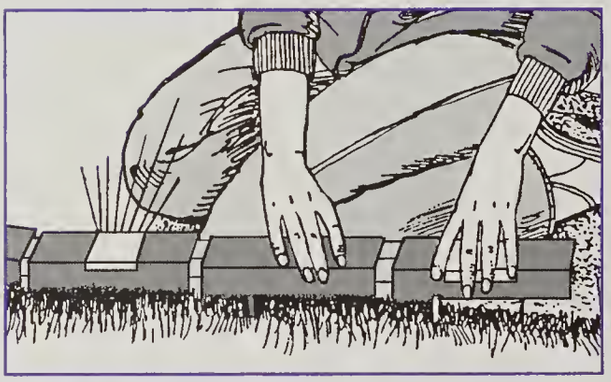
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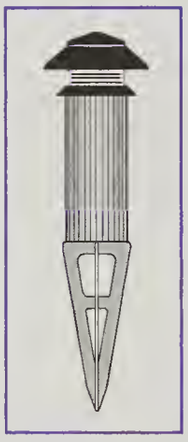
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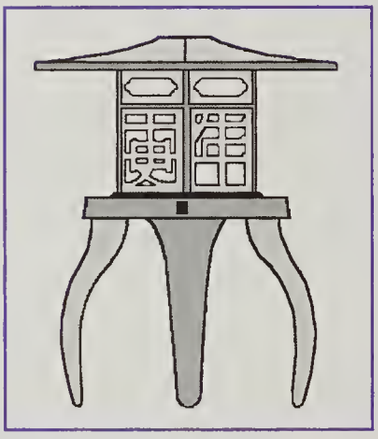
Fiber optic lighting kits for outdoors

New residential fiber optic and high-quality, low-voltage (12-volts) outdoor light kits are efficient and ideal for the do-it-yourselfer. Low-voltage lighting kits range from inexpensive plastic sets, sold at almost all hardware stores, to high-quality cast metal ones designed to last a lifetime.

Do-it-yourself fiber optic lighting is the newest type of kit designed for home use. Fiber optics are efficient and simple to install since there is no heavy electric wire to handle. It's also extremely safe because electricity doesn't flow to each light fixture in your yard. Instead of running heavy copper wire to a small bulb in each outdoor fixture, thin, durable plastic fiber optic cable is used.







For the best efficiency, Lumenyte offers kits with a high-intensity discharge metal halide light bulb in the main unit. The light travels along the small plastic fiber optic cables to each of the outdoor fixtures. Fiberstars offers a typical kit that includes four flood fixtures with a main unit. Only one efficient light bulb is needed in the main unit.

Fiber optic lighting kits are great because there are no electrical connections to get dirty and only one bulb to replace. Your first step should be to determine where you want the light fixtures to be located in your yard. Cut the plastic fiber optic cable to the correct length. Using glue included in the kit, glue on the end cap and slip the fiber optic cable into the light fixture.

For pathways or lighting around a pool where electricity is a hazard, contour fiber optic kits are ideal. These kits use special 18-strand side-glow fiber optic cables. The entire length of the cable glows. For a unique effect for a pool or garden, install a slowly rotating color wheel in the main unit. As this rotates past the main light bulb, the color in all the fixtures or in the side-glow cable changes.

Over the past several years, many improvements have been made to do-it-yourself outdoor low-voltage lighting kits. Today there are many high-quality all-metal designs, automatic timers, dimmer controls and hundreds of new decorative styles available.

If you ever tried to install a low-voltage lighting kit from several years ago, you will appreciate how easy it is to attach the new fixture connectors. If you live in an area that is damp, select a kit that uses sealed connectors to avoid corrosion. With only 12-volts, a slight amount of corrosion can reduce the light output.

The highest quality low-voltage light kits use all-metal construction. Some offer real frosted and cut glass for attractive and efficient lighting. Some also have durable polycarbonate, or bulletproof glass, lenses that are great around children. Inverted glass tulip-shaped lights with a thin curved post or stem and metal leaves are ideal for accenting flower gardens. Some taller decorative lights have planters built right into the base.

Choose fixtures with tiny halogen bulbs and built-in reflectors for bright directional accent lighting. Halogen bulbs produce a white light that is more similar to natural sunlight. Small standard incandescent or super-efficient five-watt fluorescent bulbs are good for pathway or area lighting.

To edge a sidewalk or driveway, Argee offers low-voltage lighted plastic brick kits. The snap-together bricks have built-in connectors so no extra wiring is needed. The swivel connectors are designed to look like real brick mortar joints. Real concrete interlocking bricks and blocks with built-in low voltage lights for decorative or retaining walls are also available.

To light a deck, Idaho Wood offers red cedar mini-low-voltage lighting kits. Various sizes and styles designed to mount on the deck, rails or steps are available. Mini-light kits that are mounted flush with the deck and can handle the weight of a person are also available. The kits include templates to saw the correct size opening in the deck. There are similar brick-type kits for patios and driveways that can actually support a car.

Write for Update No. 571 – a buyer's guide of 15 fiber optic and low-voltage lighting and brick kits, styles, features, prices, sample layouts and landscape lighting tips. Please include $2 and a business-size, self-addressed stamped envelope and mail to James Dulley, Carolina Country, 6906 Royalgreen Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45244.

To instantly download the material or to read previous columns, see the Web site at http://www.dulley.com.

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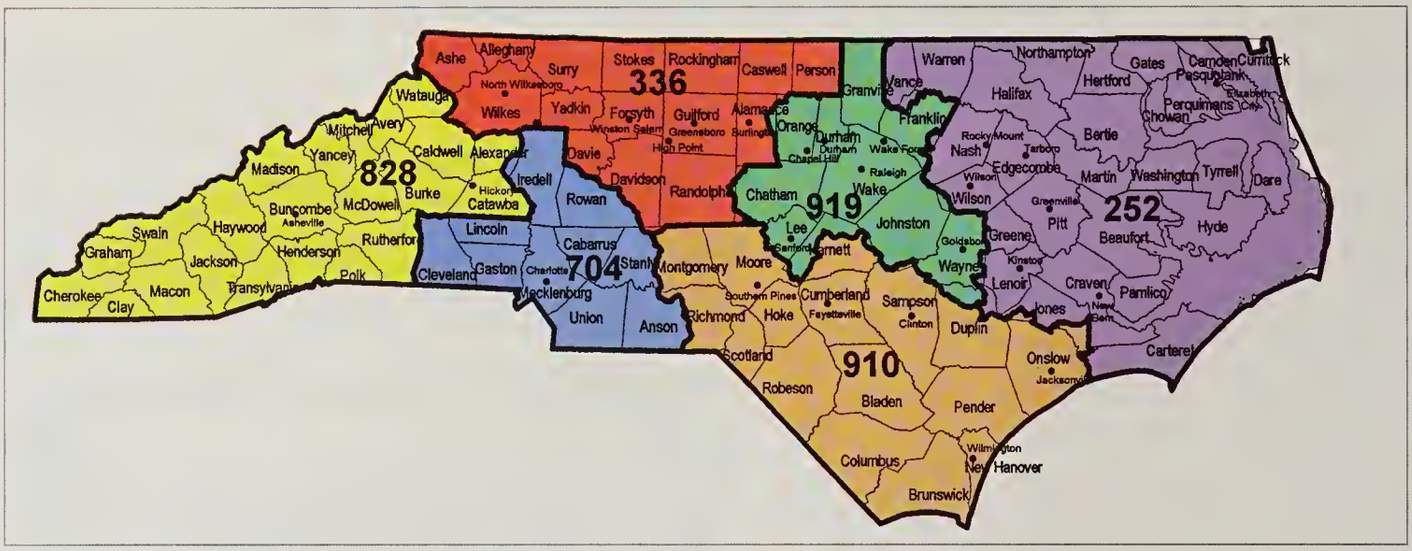
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Carolina Close-up

compiled by Laura Maynard



New area codes for North Carolina

Growth in population and in the use of telephone lines for phones, faxes and modems has caused existing North Carolina telephone area codes to run short of numbers. Three new area codes have been assigned to keep up with the demand.

Effective last Dec. 15, 1997, the Triad area, including Greensboro and Winston-Salem, formerly covered by 910, took on the area code 336. "Permissive dialing," allowing the use of either area code, will be in effect until June 15.

Northeastern North Carolina will split between the existing 919 and the new 252 area code beginning March 22. Mandatory dialing begins Sept. 21.

The western part of the state covered by area code 704, will split the new 828 number also beginning March 22. Mandatory dialing will begin Oct. 5.

In addition, some cellular services around the state will be taking an extra 18 months of permissive dialing to complete the conversion of data chips in their customers' phones. For more information contact your local or cellular service provider.

Asheville dietitians publish cookbook for diabetics

The dietitians of Mission St. Joseph's Diabetes Center in Asheville have produced a cookbook especially for diabetics and people who cook for diabetics.

"Healthy Inspirations" is a 192-page book containing healthy recipes and menus, says Cindy Spillers, director of the center. "This is a collection of delicious recipes for people who care about their health," she said. "These are recipes anyone should enjoy."

They are presented in a loose-leaf binder so that as the dietitians develop and modify more recipes, they can be added to the book.

"People are always asking us for menus and recipes, or how to modify recipes so they can use them for someone with diabetes," Spillers said.

Beginning in 1992 the center dietitians have presented their recipes and menu ideas at community cooking demonstrations. These demonstrations have always been well-attended–another indication of the need.

Other cookbooks for diabetics "have been so rigid that people got discouraged," Spillers said. "We tried to modify recipes that we knew people liked." Some examples include pound cake, buttermilk biscuits, Southern green bean casserole and mashed potatoes.

All proceeds from the sale of the book will benefit Camp Coqui, the western North Carolina summer camp for children with diabetes.

The cookbook's authors are all master's-prepared registered dietitians.

The book can be purchased by mail by sending $25, which includes shipping and handling, and your name and address to Cookbook, Diabetes Center, 445 Biltmore Ave., Asheville, NC 28801.

Interested in a cleaning service?

A national maid service franchise, Merry Maids, is looking for people to start cleaning services in small towns.

Merry Maids says the U. S. Department of Labor Statistics predicts that owning a cleaning service will be one of the top 10 occupations with significant growth through 2005. The opportunity has traditionally been concentrated in urban areas, but with the increase in working households, the small town market is expanding.

Merry Maids is based in Memphis and operates in all 50 states. For more information, call (800) 637-7962.

Anson County Heritage book is for sale

The Genealogical Society of Anson County is selling its "Anson County Heritage" book to benefit the county library and its Genealogical Room.

The 395-page book is a 9- by 12-inch hardcover edition, printed on acid-free paper. It contains 872 family histories, plus church histories, places and events of the county and a memorial and tribute section.

Copies are available for $55 plus $4 postage and handling from The Genealogical Society of Anson County, 108 Sunset Drive, Wadesboro, NC 28170. Phone: (704) 694-2664.

Historical research for central N.C.

James Vann Comer, a Sanford genealogist, conducts research, compiles publications and produces a quarterly journal concerning the history of central North Carolina.

Comer has won several awards and honors, including North Carolina Society of Historian's Religious History Book Award in 1994 and Historian of the Year Award in 1995. He has also done genealogical research for several North Carolina families and communities. Comer is also responsible for the quarterly "Central North Carolina Journal," which includes historical records and information from the entire Piedmont area.

The journal costs $7.50 each; back issues are available. For a list of publications and services, contact James Vann Comer at P.O. Box 2681, Sanford, NC 27331-2681.

The hurricanes of 1996

The size and colors of Bertha and Fran, the hurricanes that caused so much devastation in North Carolina in 1996, appear in a new poster published by Lee House in Charlotte. The images came from enhanced GOES-8 infrared satellite pictures superimposed on a map of the U.S.



The poster size is 16.5 by 25 inches. It is available shrink-wrapped on cardboard or in a tube at $20.50 each, or as two framed pieces (poster and written historical description) for $75. Prices include shipping and tax.

For more information, contact Lee House, Inc., P.O. Box 35148, Charlotte, NC 28235. Or by phone weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at (800) 532-0461.

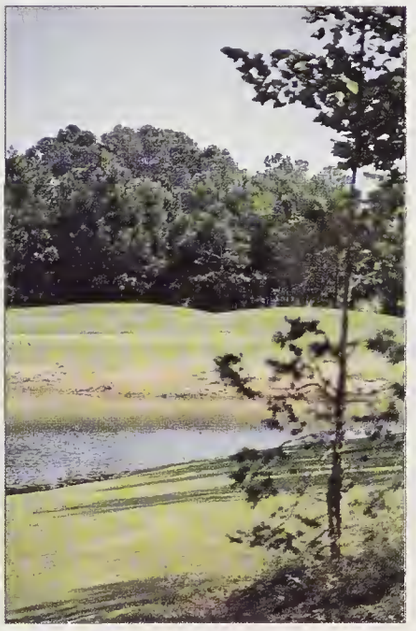


"Tucked In" by Kirk Ballard

"Tucked In" is a new limited edition release by artist Kirk Ballard. It shows a wintry Carolina Piedmont farm country scene. The image measures 13 by 24 inches. Prices are $85 for signed and numbered reproductions, $120 for artist proof reproductions and $170 for remarqued reproductions.

For more information, contact Top Drawer, 209 West Third St., Winston-Salem, NC 27101. Phone: (336) 725-8444.

New golf club in Brunswick County



The Meadowlands Golf Club recently opened in Brunswick County. Designed by architect William Byrd, known for his work with Ocean Ridge Plantation, Sea Trail and Wild Wing, Meadowlands is an 18-hole par-72 course. Unlike most in the Southeast, it has five tees and 7,054 yards. Meadowlands is also the only course in North Carolina to seek certification as a Signature Status Wildlife Sanctuary from Audubon International.

The Meadowlands Golf Club is owned and operated by the family of W.J. and Sibyl McLamb, natives of the Brunswick area and members of Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation. The course is located off Highway 17, one mile north of the state line on Calabash Road. For more information call (910) 287-7529.

How to Reach the *Marketplace*

Space is available for display ads up to one third-page in size. The cost for advertising ranges from $170 to $1550 per ad, depending upon the number of times an ad is published.

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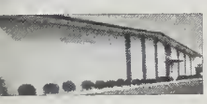
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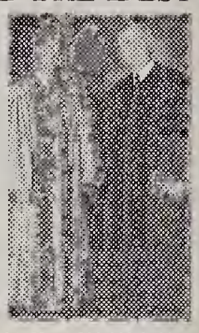
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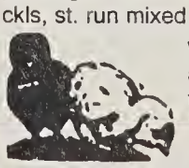
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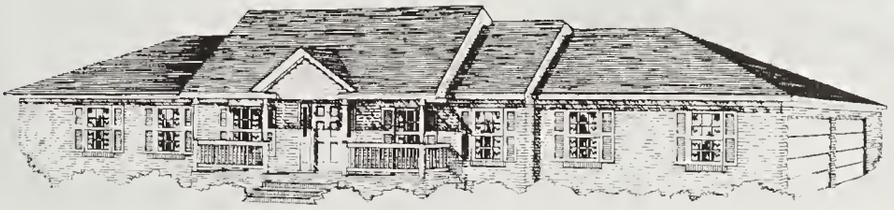
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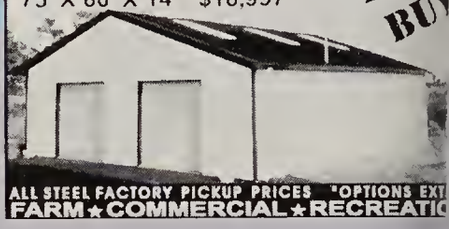
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Hank's Gardening Guide

by Hank Smith

Fleeting days of February call for increased gardening activities as we look towards spring. This is your last chance for dormant pruning for summer–flowering trees, shrubs and evergreens and for rooting the cuttings. It's time to complete the planting of bare-root roses and fruit and nut trees while they're still dormant. Apply a dormant oil spray to deciduous trees and shrubs to control insects. Prepare planting beds for vegetables, azaleas, strawberries and annual bedding plants. For landscape impact, group annuals where they will have a background of shrubs. Here, they'll be more easily maintained. If annuals are scattered over an open lawn or along walkways and driveways, they detract from the spacious look of open spaces. Winter days begin to give way to hints of spring as early flowering bulbs and shrubs begin to show color. Don't let the month slip by without getting a head start on gardening chores.

Jog wisteria blooms

By root-pruning wisteria now, you'll stimulate more blooms and larger clusters of flowers. Spade around the plant 4-to-6 feet from main trunk, making a circle. Force spade into soil at least six feet. Established plants can become a problem because they spread rapidly. After flowering, cut back long sprays that are seeking to secure themselves to other limbs and branches.

Training evergreens

Prune cone–bearing evergreens now to keep them attractive and within bounds. Plants respond best if pruned each year by clipping back each branch to desired height and spread.

Start vegetables now

Seeds for indoor sowing include tomatoes, peppers, eggplant and broccoli. When warm weather arrives, these plants should be large enough to set outdoors. These may be sown directly into the garden at this time: carrots, beets, mustard, radishes, spinach and turnips.

Pest control

If you do not follow organic-gardening rules, initiate a spray program for control of blackspot on roses. For control of rosette disease in pecans, apply zinc sulfate over root zone of pecan trees using five pounds per 200 square feet of branch spread. In highly alkaline soils, better results are obtained by spraying the zinc sulfate onto the foliage when new growth appears. Inspect deciduous trees and shrubs for infestations of scale insects. A spray of dormant oil emulsion will provide good control. For scale insects on evergreen ornamental plants, wait until temperature is above freezing and below 85 degrees to apply a light–weight summer oil emulsion.

Lawns

If fallen leaves still cover your lawn, make an effort to remove them this month. Tender grass can be killed by a number of problems associated with a cover of fallen leaves including shade, insects, diseases and too much moisture. Stock up on a complete fertilizer such as 8-8-8 or an equivalent for an application to the lawn just as new growth begins. Apply 15 to 20 pounds per 1,000 square feet.

Delay pruning freeze-damaged plants

If any of your plants were damaged by severe cold, wait until they have had time to begin a comeback before pruning them. Cold-damaged stems and branches will not do further damage to plants if they are allowed to remain until plants have had time to begin recovery. The amount of damage done can be determined more accurately a few weeks after the cold spell. Scratch the bark to see how far back there is freeze damage then prune back to live wood.

Azalea care

During mild winters with only a few short cold spells, azaleas are apt to show tender growth in February. If allowed to develop, these new shoots divert the strength of the plant away from the flower buds which causes them to dry up. Pinch off any new tender growth that appears along the sides of flower buds. This will not harm later normal growth.

Deerproofing the hedge

Deer, however beautiful, can cause problems if they're hungry. It doesn't take them long to destroy a hedge. No recommended repellents, such as human hair from barber shop sweepings, hot pepper, soap or garlic have proven very effective. A good repellent is Chew Not, sold at most garden supply stores. It's easy to use and lasts for months. It dries as a whitish film and causes plants to have a sickly appearance, although it does no damage to plants. It costs $40 to $50 for enough to cover 100 feet of hedge. Chew Not must be applied on a dry day when the temperature is above 40 degrees. It has not been fully tested on vegetables and flower gardens.

Get set with garden tools

If you didn't do it last fall, now is the time to get garden tools ready for spring use. Clean rust from your trowel, spade, fork, and hoe with steel wool. To prevent rust from returning, apply a coating of mineral oil or used motor oil with a cloth. While you're at it, use a file to sharpen your spade and hoe and then apply a coating of oil.

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Recipe — Pork and Pasta Skillet Supper

1 pound ground pork
1 medium onion, chopped
1 14 ½-ounce can pasta-ready tomatoes
1 8-ounce can tomato sauce
1 small yellow summer squash or zucchini
1 ½ cups (4 ounces uncooked) hot cooked penne pasta, or other small pasta shape

Step 1. Heat nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add pork and onion. Cook and stir until evenly browned.
Step 2. Stir in tomatoes and tomato sauce. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low, and cook for 5 minutes.
Step 3. Stir in squash and pasta. Cook for 2 to 5 minutes or until heated through.
Serve with a crisp green salad and French bread.
Servings: 4
Preparation time: 15 minutes

Nutrient information per serving: Calories: 313, Protein: 29 gm., Fat: 10 gm., Sodium: 227 mg., Cholesterol: 91 mg.

For more pork information and recipes, contact the North Carolina Pork Council at 156 Mine Lake Court, Raleigh, NC 27615. Phone: (919) 846-9758.

Also, check the N.C. Department of Agriculture Web site at www.agr.state.nc.us/



Recipe — Pork Tenderloin with Gingersnap Gravy

1 whole pork tenderloin, about 12 ounces
2 tablespoons butter or margarine, divided
½ cup water
¼ cup sliced green onion
2 tablespoons chopped celery
1 clove garlic, minced
1 tablespoon cornstarch
½ teaspoon ground ginger
¼ teaspoon pepper
⅛ teaspoon dried thyme, crushed
Dash of rubbed sage

In a large skillet melt 1 tablespoon of butter. Add tenderloin and brown quickly on all sides. Remove from heat and gradually add water. Cover and cook over low heat for 30 to 45 minutes or until pork is done. Remove tenderloin; keep warm. Drain drippings into a 1-cup measure; set aside.

In a skillet melt 1 tablespoon of butter. Add green onion, celery and garlic. Sauté about 4 minutes or until crisp-tender.

Combine cornstarch, ginger, pepper, thyme and sage; mix well. Push vegetables to side of skillet; add cornstarch mixture, stirring until smooth. Add reserved drippings; cook over medium-high heat until thickened and bubbly.

To serve, slice pork and serve atop gravy.

Servings: 2 Preparation time: 20 minutes Cooking time: 25 minutes

Nutrient information per Serving: Calories: 321, Protein: 37 gm., Fat: 17 gm., Sodium: 192 mg., Cholesterol: 132 mg.

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How to Get a Fast Mortgage Loan To Pay Off All Your Bills**

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ckingham, N.C. - Ray and Becky were strated. They'd bought the house 12 years and it was five years old when they moved Becky laughed out loud when she thought k to that time. Back then it seemed so big beautiful. But now, 12 years and 3 kids r, the house felt small and run down. The sc needed a new roof and her two youngest s, Emily and Katie, were doubling up in the ll 10 x 12 bedroom.

e years ago, Ray and Becky had a contractor ne and talk to them about a new addition. ky remembered how excited she and Ray were. They even paid to have the plans vn up. But that was the year before Ray lost job at the plant. She poured herself another of coffee and recalled how depressed they were. It was over a year before he got ther job. And during that time, they got ind on everything.

No Summer Vacation

y were so strapped for money one summer, couldn't even take Emily and Katie to the h for a few days for their annual vacation. they finally got all caught up when Ray t back to work, it took them two years and hat time it had ruined their previously ect credit record, it was a vicious cycle. You w, getting paid on Friday, sitting down on rday to pay bills and running out of money re all the bills are paid.

"I Hit A Brick Wall"

r they got caught up they tried again to ow the money for the addition. First they urned down by the local bank, then a gage company in town rejected them. They kept hitting the same brick wall. Even gh Ray had gone back to work in another et mill making MORE money, the late nents that showed up on his credit reports ed the local banks and mortgage companies y. Ray felt like he was working JUST to his monthly bills and doing nothing for elf, Becky or the kids. Then he ran into est Mortgage Company. Harvest helped get a loan to pay off all his bills and olidate everything into one single payment was $358 lower than he had been making. saved him a whopping $4,296 per year, FREE. In the first year, that was enough ey to close in the back porch, AND enough ver for new bikes for the kids.

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$25,000	**Current Payment**	**$775.00**

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